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## PREFACE.

It has been said that History unenlightened by Philosophy is no better than an old almanac. This surely cannot mean that the simple narration of the events which have led to, or in themselves may have been so many steps in, the development of a country, is without value. It is sincerely hoped that this is not so, for in the present work there will be found nothing of the nature of a philosophical disquisition on the springs of human conduct, or on the origin and growth of civil society, nor any views respecting the right principles to be adopted in the formation and government of Colonies; yet it is believed that a straightforward, unbiassed account of the circumstances of hardship, endurance and perseverance under which the Eastern Province took its rise and continued to struggle for so many years will be read with interest, and the lack of philosophy pardoned.

The present work was commenced about seventeen years ago—and is still continued—as a recreation. Arriving in Grahamstown in 1891, my curiosity was soon aroused in many of the old military buildings which still remain, particularly the old Drostdy House. On seeking information regarding their history I came into contact with many old people who remembered clearly much which seemed to be worthy of being put on record. This led to numerous interviews, during which all they could tell me was written down. Among these old people, with whom it has been my pleasure to converse, there were many who came out to this country with the



settlers of 1820, and who had clear recollections not only of the voyage itself, but also of incidents which happened in England before they sailed. I do not think that, at this date, there can be one remaining of those who actually landed at Algoa Bay in 1820. All those I have met are now dead, and had the opportunities not been taken of drawing from them and recording accounts of their early experiences, much which is worth knowing would now have been beyond reach. In amplification of the information which has thus been obtained I discovered a rich mine of historical wealth in the Record room of the Civil Commissioner's Office in Grahamstown. There, in that safe-keeping, is a large number of old musty volumes containing many hundreds of most interesting and valuable letters, dating back almost to the foundation of Grahamstown (1812). By the kindness of the then Civil Commissioner, John Hemming, Esq., I obtained Government permission to search through these—a delightful task which including the copying and *précising* took a good deal of my spare time during about ten years. Extending the field of inquiry further, I utilised parts of my holidays by searching in the Government offices in Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet, and finally in the richest store-house of all, the Archives Department in the Houses of Parliament in Cape Town. In carrying out this last, however, I received much valuable assistance which will be referred to later. In order to interview old people who lived in other parts of the country as well as to examine the many places and sites of historical interest, I have journeyed some hundreds of miles on foot. I have tried horseback, but my few attempts having been fraught with consequences which give me no pleasure to recall to mind, I have therefore preferred walking. In these wanderings I have received much kind hospitality from Dutch people and also from the “raw” Kaffir; albeit a solitary man travelling without a horse is regarded with some suspicion. I have

found that nights spent on the open veldt, in consequence of having lost the way, conduce to reflection, but to stand all through a dark and drizzly night at no great distance from the edge of a precipice on the Great Winterberg Mountain creates a longing for society. Most of the information collected in the ways indicated, referring as it does to events of dates later than 1820, forms the material for other volumes. For the first few chapters of the present volume I have traversed ground which has been worked over before, *viz.*, Moodie's Records, Watermeyer's Lectures, and such writings as those of Sparmann, Le Vaillant, Paterson, Barrow, Lichtenstein and G. Thompson, and the Imperial Blue Books of the times. For the later chapters I have made free use of the *Records of Cape Colony*, thirty-two volumes of letters and documents relating to South African affairs now in London, but collected and transcribed by that indefatigable worker in African history, Dr. G. McC. Theal, late Colonial Historiographer. The account of the Slagter's Nek affair in chapter xi. is based entirely on the evidence taken on oath during the trials, and differs very considerably from that given by Pringle on the one hand, and *Di Afrikaanse Patriot* on the other. The utmost care has been taken to sift the truth from the voluminous matter on the subject. The material for the "Black Circuit" is from the manuscripts in the Archives in Cape Town.

In reading through the many documents relating to the numerous and continued inroads of Bushmen and Kaffirs, which took place before the influx of the British into the Eastern Province, one cannot but be impressed with the patient heroism of the Dutch inhabitants in their incessant struggles to preserve their homes and properties. So much has been written and said in high official quarters concerning the cruelty and oppression of the Dutch towards the native races, and so little on the aggressions of the latter on the former, except in so far

that depredations have been represented as retaliation for previous ill-treatment, that one feels constrained to pause and say *audi alteram partem*. That there have been bad characters among the Dutch, as among all nationalities, no one for a moment will deny, but to regard all the sufferings which have befallen the whole of the frontier inhabitants as the result of their own wickedness, and the Kaffirs as harmless and inoffensive neighbours—"Black Scotchmen" as they were once called in Exeter Hall—is either to acknowledge oneself ignorant of the facts, or deliberately to refuse to be actuated by a sense of justice. Surely a people who lived in constant fear of being murdered by savages, or having their homes destroyed by fire and robbed of their means of subsistence, deserve some consideration and sympathy. In fighting for their country, they were volunteers of an ideal type, for not only did they go forth for indefinite times on the arduous duties of the constantly recurring commandos *without pay*, but equipped and provisioned themselves at their own expense, gunpowder being the only necessary provided by the Government. Details substantiating all this will be found in the following chapters.

It is now my pleasant duty to express my most sincere thanks to many who have rendered me valuable assistance in one way or another. In the first place my gratitude is due to the Right Hon. Dr. L. S. Jameson, C.B., and Sir Lewis Mitchell, trustees under the will of the late Right Hon. C. J. Rhodes, for a grant of money which has enabled me to have the remains of the old Eastern Frontier Forts and other historical monuments photographed, and thus a record of them kept; to procure continued assistance in the copying of the manuscripts in Cape Town, besides enlisting the services of others in typewriting, etc. I wish also to express my indebtedness to the Hon. Colonel Crewe, late Colonial Secretary, and Mr. Noel Janisch, Under Colonial Sec-

retary, for the facilities they gave me in gaining access to the Archives, also to the Civil Commissioners of Albany, Alexandria, Uitenhage, Colesberg, Tarkastad and Graaff Reinet for the trouble they have taken in allowing me to examine old papers, instituting inquiries and for correspondence; to Louis Mansergh, Esq., head of the Public Works Department, for the circular letter he caused to be sent to all the Civil Commissioners of the Eastern Province asking for information respecting the remains of old forts. Professor A. R. Lord, M.A., of Rhodes University College, has very greatly assisted me in carefully reading through this work, suggesting alterations and additions and in other ways giving me the benefit of his wisdom and sound learning. Sir John Graham has very kindly allowed me to use a quantity of the private correspondence of his grandfather, Colonel John Graham, the founder of Grahamstown.

In honour of the memory of those who have now departed this life and who bore the burden of life in the Eastern Province in the early settler days, as well as in private duty bound, I would mention the following:—Dr. W. Guybon Atherstone, of Damant's party; William Watson, of Hayhurst's party; Elijah Pike and his sister, Mrs. Cawood, both of the Nottingham party; D. Farley, of Hyman's party; G. Dredge, of Scott's party; also those of a later date, the Hon. W. Ayliff; Mr. Whitfield, of the Fish River mouth; Mr. Macgilvrie, of Queenstown; Mr. J. Gush, of Salem; Mr. C. Cock, of Lessendrum, Peddie; Mrs. Brown, of Auckland (Amatola Mountains); Mr. John Wedderburn, of Grahamstown; Mrs. Lombard, of De Bruin's Drift; Mr. Piet Coester, guide to the troops during the wars of '35 and '46; Mr. and Mrs. Haywood, of Bathurst; and several others, including some old soldiers of the 91st Regiment and the old Cape Corps. I must not omit to acknowledge with sincere thanks the work

done by Miss S. Metelerkamp in the Archives in Cape Town. For over six months she toiled daily with the early manuscripts, and thus put me in possession of valuable notes which I should not have obtained without this assistance. Miss E. E. K. Walker, B.A., and Miss W. Day, both of Grahamstown, have done the necessary typewriting and indexing, and thus enabled me to make the best use of the limited time I can devote to this work.

I can now only trust that all this work may not have been in vain, and that a book devoted essentially to the History of the Eastern Province may be regarded as a not altogether useless addition to South African literature.

GEO. E. CORY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

DURING the fifteenth century, Venice was the chief continental emporium for the gold, diamonds, silks and other costly commodities of India and the East; and notwithstanding the difficulties of transport which involved—in part at least—tedious and dangerous overland journeys, this Italian republic enjoyed an almost complete monopoly of the Eastern trade. Towards the end of that century, the Portuguese, possibly in the hope of breaking down this monopoly, became most active and daring in maritime exploration and endeavoured to discover an ocean way to India. In this they were completely successful. From time to time various navigators had ventured along the western coast of the African continent, each succeeding explorer reaching a little farther south than his predecessor, until in 1486 the intrepid Bartholomew Diaz with two small vessels rounded the Cape of Good Hope and sailed along the southern coast as far as about the mouth of the Great Fish River. He was, however, compelled to return to Lisbon in consequence of the unwillingness of his crews to proceed farther. Eleven years afterwards, Vasco di Gama, following the same course, continued the journey eastwards until—crowning the enterprise of his countrymen—he eventually reached India. The ocean highway having been at length discovered, it was but a short time before the commercial prosperity of Venice waned and dwindled almost to nothing and Lisbon became the mart of Eastern produce. This was the condition of affairs during the next hundred years. In accordance, however, with the proverbial tendency of history to repeat itself, a course of events similar to that which brought about the fall of Venice was in operation against Portugal. Other Powers, looking with envious eyes on the stream of riches which was flowing into that country, were seeking the means of diverting it wholly, or in

CHAP.  
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CHAP. I. part, in their own direction. Holland, the country next destined to secure the Eastern trade, had fitted out an expedition in the hope of finding a way to China by a north-east route, but without success. As sometimes happens in human affairs, comparatively insignificant and unlooked-for events bring about results which costly and well-planned operations might fail to effect; a circumstance of such a nature led to the establishment of that most powerful and national mercantile association, the Netherlands East India Company.

Although Portugal had jealously endeavoured to conceal the secrets and working of their Eastern trade from foreigners, one, Cornelius Houtman, a Dutchman, became fully acquainted with all. He had been thrown into prison, for debt, according to some—for political and religious reasons, according to others. Communicating with his friends in Amsterdam, he offered to divulge all he knew in return for being set at liberty. The offer was accepted. His statements created much excitement in Holland, and resulted in the formation of a number of separate companies to compete with Portugal in the lucrative trade. The prospect of dazzling commercial success was most inviting to the traders of Holland; capital was readily accumulated and all the means were at hand for embarking on the enterprise with confidence. In 1495 the first four ships left Texel, with Houtman on board in charge of the commercial part of the expedition. The ships touched at the Cape and were probably the very first vessels to anchor in Table Bay. The expedition lasted a little over two years and met with as much success as could reasonably be expected.

Foreseeing the national advantage which the acquisition of the monopoly of this trade would secure, and the better to combine for offence and defence on the open sea as well as with greater authority to treat with the potentates of the East, the Government of the Netherlands conceived the idea of amalgamating the different companies into one huge concern. Accordingly in 1602 the charter of a new company, called the Netherlands East India Company, was promulgated, the preamble of which clearly indicates the objects of the Government. It is as follows: "Whereas the welfare of the United Netherlands principally consists in trade and navigation, which, from immemorial date, have been pursued from these shores, and

from time to time commerce has in a praiseworthy manner increased, not only with the neighbouring countries, but also with the distant nations in Europe, Asia and Africa; and whereas during the last ten years, some of the principal merchants in the Netherlands, engaged in commerce and navigation with the City of Amsterdam, have, at great cost, trouble and risk, established a company for the purpose of carrying on a laudable traffic with the East Indies, with good prospect of great profit,—and many other merchants of Zeeland, on the Meuse, in the North, and in West Friesland, have established like companies for a like purpose; we, having considered and maturely weighed of how much importance to the State and its citizens it is, that this commerce should be placed and enabled to flourish on a good footing, under systematic regulations and governance, have thought fit to propose that the said companies should be united in a firm and certain union, and in such manner that all subjects of the United Provinces may participate in the profits thereof".<sup>1</sup>

The General Council of Direction of the Company consisted of seventeen members, chosen so as to give representation to the various commercial centres in proportion to the capital subscribed. This was the powerful Chamber of Seventeen, which exercised an authority in distant parts comparable with that of national Governments of a later date. It was empowered to "enter into treaties with princes and potentates, and to contract in the name of the United Netherlands and its Government; and that they shall be entitled to build fortifications, and to appoint governors and to establish garrisons, and create officers of justice,—provided, however, that these officers and those in the Civil and Military service shall take the oath of allegiance to the States General".

During the ensuing half-century the undertaking prospered beyond the most sanguine dreams of its promoters. The Portuguese were practically driven from the ocean route they had discovered and their Eastern trade passed into the hands of the Dutch. The Company's vessels in passing and repassing the Cape, called at Table Bay, where, besides procuring fresh water from a stream which came from the mountain and

<sup>1</sup> *Groot Placat Boek*, vol. i., p. 529.

CHAP. I. ran into the sea, they also obtained small quantities of fresh meat from the natives who happened to be near at the time of call. An equally important object in touching at the Cape was to obtain letters and other documents which had been left by vessels going in the opposite direction. These papers were hidden under stones, which had been prepared for the purpose, and thus a means of communication between the outward and homeward bound vessels was established. It is somewhat surprising that during the first half-century of the Company's existence the mercantile genius, which in all else characterised the undertaking, had not led to the discovery of the great advantage which would accrue to the ocean traffic by the establishment of a definite and well-organised victualling station at the Cape. The long voyages and want of fresh provisions played great havoc among the crews. It was no uncommon occurrence—even after such a step had been taken—for a large percentage of the sailors to die on the voyage from scurvy, and the remainder to arrive at the Cape in such a state of weakness that their combined strength was not equal to the task of setting the sail or lowering the anchor. However, in 1648 an event happened which brought the potentialities of the Cape before the notice of the Chamber of Seventeen and opened their eyes to its value as a dependency of the Company.

In that year one of the Company's finest ships, the *Haarlem*, was blown on to the shore of Table Bay and became a total wreck. All on board got safely to land, and managed to save most of the cargo. During the five months the shipwrecked mariners had to wait for the next passing vessel, they endeavoured to ensure themselves against possible starvation by sowing some vegetable seeds which had been saved with the cargo. Good crops were raised. They came into contact with the natives, who seemed to be friendly disposed and from whom cattle and sheep were obtained in exchange for merchandise. Their own efforts provided them with fish and game in abundance, and to fill their cup of happiness to the brim, their enforced stay happened to be at that time of the year when the weather is most delightful. The favourable and happy impressions thus produced determined them, on their return to Holland, to recommend that a permanent station should be formed and that servants of the Company be

sent forth to plant gardens and by other means to obtain the provisions which the ships so sorely needed on their arrival at the Cape.

CHAP.  
I.

In due course the proposal was brought before the directors, but nothing was done for some time. In 1652, however, the scheme had been so favourably considered that a small fleet of three ships, the *Dromedaris*, *Reiger* and *Gaede Hoop*, under command of Jan van Riebeeck, was despatched and arrived at Table Bay on April 7th of that year. The commander had received instructions to build a fort for protection against the natives, and to take possession of sufficient land for gardens and pasturage for cattle. This small body of pioneers, who made the beginning of Cape Colony, had to endure exceptional hardships in the first instance. They arrived in late autumn, and suffered much in consequence of the cold, boisterous winds. Rain had not fallen for some time, and the ground was so hard as to aggravate seriously the difficulties of manual labour in their enfeebled condition. The natives, further, showed no disposition to aid them with supplies of cattle. In short, the various features of the pleasant picture drawn by the survivors of the *Haarlem* failed, one by one, to be realised. With the advent of better weather and other propitious circumstances, health and strength were regained, and the first definite and permanent settlement in South Africa was established. The history of the next four years is chiefly an account of the servants of the Company carrying out their instructions—enlivened, it may be, with the more than occasional visits of lions and other wild beasts to the cattle kraals. The most prominent feature of that time, as well as of all the subsequent history of this country, was the native question. The natives with whom these first settlers came in contact were a small tribe of Hottentots—the Goringhaikonas,—by the Dutch called Strandloopers. These inhabited the sea-shore and immediately contiguous land and lived in a most miserable condition, their food consisting chiefly of shell-fish. Possessing no cattle and bringing to the fort little else than a voracious appetite, not much business with them was possible. Other and more inland tribes were better off and with these an acquaintance was soon made, either by the natives themselves having the curiosity to visit the settlement of white men, or by the more adven-

CHAP. I. turous pioneers making short tours of exploration into the adjacent country to barter for cattle. Although Riebeeck carried out, to the letter, his instructions with reference to kind and conciliating treatment of the natives, hostile encounters began on the fourth day after landing. On that day, for no apparent reason, a party of Hottentots made a deliberate attack on a small party engaged in building the fort. The assailants were driven off and no one was hurt. It very shortly afterwards became evident that a condition of continual strife was the normal state of affairs among the various tribes. According to Stow<sup>1</sup> there were at this time five tribes of Hottentots inhabiting the Cape peninsula and surrounding country, numbering altogether, including women and children, from 13,000 to 14,000 souls (*vide* Stow, p. 247). With these people a trade in cattle and sheep was carried on. At times the animals were brought to the fort by the Hottentots and exchanged for copper bars, beads, arrack, brandy and tobacco; at other times when a sufficiency was not forthcoming to meet the requirements of the ships, the settlers would visit the different tribes, or some members of one tribe would be commissioned to carry on traffic with others on behalf of the Company. But this did not work satisfactorily. The natives did not regard the presence of the strangers with any friendly eye, and any service rendered was only a means of gratifying some temporary desire. As time went on, they perceived from the gradual enlargement of the vegetable patches in Table Bay and the general extension of operations, that the occupation was not only a permanent one, but that their own hitherto unrestricted use of the pasture was threatened. Trouble ensued: but at no time was the settlement in any great danger, as the tribes, instead of combining for common offence, were constantly quarrelling among themselves, and one or the other seeking help from the Dutch, but Van Riebeeck,

<sup>1</sup> The following is an estimate of the probable strength of the various Hottentot tribes near the Cape at the time of the landing of Van Riebeeck:—

The Cochoquas, in two divisions, one under Oedasoq, the other under Gonema, 1,000 men.

The Gorachouqua, under Choro, 600 to 700 men.

The little Chariguriqua or Grigriqua, 300 men.

The Goringhaiqua under Gogosoa, 300 men.

The Goringhaikonas under Captain Harry, 18 men.

(*The Native Races of South Africa*, by George W. Stow, F.G.S., 1905, p. 246.)

following his instructions to avoid the possibility of giving offence to any tribe, impartially refused to interfere. He soon discovered that none of them were to be trusted, no matter how kindly they were treated. Even Harry, or Herry, the chief of the half-starved Strandloopers, who acted as his interpreter, repaid many acts of special kindness by desertion, and though he had been fed from the commander's own table, he was in a large degree responsible for the constant plunder of the cattle and for the murder of one of the men. Conciliation was quite useless, as it ever has been ; but is perhaps the only policy which can be adopted in a dependency where the mother country cannot or will not supply the means of enforcing obedience to her commands. Van Riebeek's patience was sorely tried. He regretted that he was not permitted to seize the cattle of the natives and reduce the owners to slavery ; instead of which he had to be content, at times, with buying back cattle which he well knew had been stolen, shaking hands with the thieves in token of friendship and receiving the empty promise that no further depredations should occur. Four years' experience in cattle dealing with the Hottentots made it abundantly evident that no success could attend the methods hitherto employed. The natives parted with the cattle grudgingly, in spite of the allurements of arrack, brandy and tobacco ; and further, a tribe hostile to either the Company or another tribe had been known to station itself between those who were willing to supply cattle and the fort and thus cut off the supplies. To obviate this and to render the settlement more independent of the fortunes and changing sentiments of the natives, it was decided to liberate some of the servants of the Company and to allow them, in a measure, to become farmers on their own account. The project, in theory at all events, seemed tempting. As much land as could be brought under cultivation in three years was to be granted free of all taxes for that period and at the expiration of that time to be retained at a moderate rent. They were also to enjoy the privilege of purchasing provisions from the Company's stores at the same rates as sold to the Company's servants, and of purchasing cattle from the Company at certain fixed low rates. They were to be allowed to sell the vegetables, which were not required for the garrison to the crews of the vessels, and lastly, to



CHAP. I. ensure a market for their produce, the Company undertook to purchase all the cattle which they bred as well as all the grain raised. On the other hand, such conditions and restrictions were imposed, that some, perhaps the more shrewd and farsighted, judged it better to remain in receipt of a definite salary and withdrew their applications. The restrictions were of a very selfish and tyrannical nature, and clearly indicated the purely commercial instincts of those who framed them. They varied from time to time, according to the caprice of the commander or other higher authority of the Company who happened to be calling at the Cape. The general policy was, however, that the "free burghers," as they were called, were forbidden to buy anywhere except at the Company's stores—and, of course, only at the Company's prices. They were only permitted to sell to the ships after three days from their arrival, when, presumably, all that was required had been purchased from the Company's stores. Dealing in cattle with the natives was most strictly forbidden, not so much from a desire to see those people well treated, but in order to prevent a rise in the price of stock, consequent upon the farmers becoming the rivals of the Company in this trade. Commissioner Verburg, reporting upon the state of the settlement in 1672, said: "The Dutch colonists at the Cape of Good Hope bear the name of free men, but they are so trammelled and confined in all things, that the absence of any freedom is but too manifest. The orders and proclamations, from time to time issued, are so rigid that it would be impossible to carry out the penalties therein, except with the utter ruin of the burghers." In commenting upon the relations existing between the Company and its servants, it must be borne in mind that it was not the intention of Holland to form a Colony at the Cape, but rather to establish and maintain at a minimum cost a distant water and cattle station whose existence had no other purpose than to facilitate the ocean traffic. The advantage of the Company was in view, therefore, when these servants were encouraged to become "free burghers" but were in reality still servants, the difference between the two conditions being little more than in name. Governor Wagenaar in his instructions to his successor in 1666, says: "With respect to these free men, or Cape Colonists, I have to remark that hitherto their freedom

and domiciliation have been granted to them with no other view than to aid in cultivating the soil here, and rendering it fruitful, so that we may be able to obtain our own bread and rice for the Company and not require, as has hitherto been the case, to seek it in India or elsewhere". The land occupied by the first free burghers who elected to become farmers was along the Liesbeek River, near the present Cape Town suburb, Mowbray. A number of others who were liberated were permitted to follow other pursuits—trades which were of value to the Company. There were tailors, carpenters, waggon and plough makers, professional hunters, and, it might be added, professional explorers. As soon as the first difficulties of the settlement had been overcome and the immediate neighbourhood with its inhabitants became well known, the view of the distant Hottentots Holland and other mountains visible from Cape Town must have aroused curiosity in the more adventurous—ready for any enterprise of rashness and daring—to learn what was beyond. The spirit of geographical inquiry and the desire to penetrate to the unknown regions to the north and the east led to the despatch of numerous exploratory expeditions. In 1655 the first party went forth, under the leadership of one Jan Wintervogel, an intrepid traveller who was said to have made his way across South America, from ocean to ocean. The expedition took a northerly direction and was away nineteen days. Such journeys of exploration were encouraged by the supreme authorities in Holland and rewards were offered for any discovery of note. In 1657 a party under Abraham Gabbema went out and discovered the Paarl Mountain and Berg River, and in the following year another party journeyed to the north-east as far as the Tulbagh Valley. In 1661 Van Riebeeck sent forth an expedition in quest of the rumoured empire of Monomotapa, and the golden city of Davagul—which curiously enough was believed to be somewhere in the vicinity of the present golden Johannesburg. This party went some distance to the north of the Olifant's River, in the present district of Calvinia, and then returned. But the largest undertaking of this kind was the famous expedition of Governor Simon van der Stell in 1685 in search of the copper mountains of Namaqualand. The governor himself went accompanied by fifty-six Europeans, forty-six drivers and leaders, Hottentot

CHAP. I. interpreters and slaves. The imposing procession consisted of fifteen waggons, eight carts and one coach and two small cannon, together with two hundred spare oxen, thirteen horses and eight mules. They followed the track of previous explorers and eventually arrived at the copper district of Namaqualand, and then returned partly by a coast route to the Cape, the journey lasting five months. Thus considerable knowledge of the country to the north was acquired. In the easterly direction, Hieronymus Cruse had crossed the Hottentots Holland Mountains in 1668 and had penetrated as far as Mossel Bay. Besides these, there were minor expeditions, such as those brought about by following up and recapturing stolen cattle and also those involved in the burghers taking advantage of temporary permission to trade with distant natives. While these exploring activities were adding knowledge of new territories, the land in actual occupation was also increasing and the boundaries of the settlement tending to follow up the discoveries. The original number of farmers was reinforced from time to time, partly by soldiers and sailors being permitted to leave the ships, and partly by some, though only a few, who came from Holland as emigrants with promise of free passage, as much land as they could cultivate, and supplies of stock, seed and agricultural implements at low rates. But the largest addition to the population was that due to the arrival of the Huguenots in 1688. To provide pasture land for this increasing population involved an expansion of the original settlement beyond the Cape Peninsula. In 1678 the land at the base of the Hottentots Holland Mountains became burghers' farms, while in 1683 the Company itself annexed land at Klapmuts as an out-station for the pasturage of its own cattle. The Huguenots were located at French Hoek and about the same time the village of Stellenbosch was founded. There a magistrate—or landdrost, as he was called—was stationed, with jurisdiction over all the known country, except the division of the Cape, which consisted of a small indefinite strip of country extending from St. Helena Bay to False Bay. This gradual usurpation of territory by the white man was anything but gratifying to the natives, who found themselves being entirely excluded from lands over which they had been accustomed to roam unrestricted and on which they were now regarded as intruders

and trespassers. But, as has been pointed out, they were unable to make any combined effort to prevent further extension, and so an intermittent, and more or less successful, warfare of plunder was carried on until the whole Hottentot difficulty was solved by a terrible outbreak of small-pox, which visited the Colony in 1713. So virulent was the attack, on both white and black, that some entire tribes of Hottentots were completely annihilated and others greatly reduced in numbers. The remnants of these broken tribes, with all the feeling of clan-ship and nationality destroyed, submitted quietly to the rule of the white man,—even to desiring and accepting the nomination of their chiefs by the commander or governor. From this time we find the Hottentots living peaceably with the Dutch.

CHAP.  
I.

The circumstances of life of the increasing burgher population under the immediate rule of the Netherlands East India Company were such as to keep them in a state of hopeless poverty. The general selfish policy of the Company at home was administered with injustice and oppression by the officials on the spot. The salaries of all, from the governor down to the lowest clerk, were small, but to augment them those highest in authority were granted certain monopolies and the privilege of trading on their own account. This speculation—or perhaps more correctly, peculation—led to the grossest abuses. The highest functionaries could act much as they pleased, so long as it was considered that the interests of the Company were not injured. Those under authority were not only fettered by regulations which would crush any honest industry, but had to compete against their despotic superiors under conditions which practically drove them from the market. The farming operations of Governor William van der Stell give a good idea of the extent to which it was possible for this state of things to be carried. This governor possessed a farm—*Vergelegen*—at Hottentots Holland, on which he had built a large dwelling-house for himself, accommodation for servants, a mill and tannery. He had also large stores for wine and grain, which usually contained large quantities of each for purposes of trade. The lands were in a high state of cultivation, bearing 400,000 vines, thousands of fruit trees and everything else which could be raised. Beyond the mountains, he had no less than fifteen different cattle stations on which were 800 cattle

CHAP. and 10,000 sheep. Although all this existed for the governor's  
1. private profit, it was worked almost entirely at the expense of the Company, but without their knowledge. There were sixty servants and 100 slaves working continually on the estate, besides his smiths, waggoners and many others. The head gardener of the Company was his superintendent. The waggons, ploughs and other implements were made with the Company's iron and the necessary wood for the establishment came from the Company's forests. With officials in a position to trade and glut the limited market in this manner, the burghers with their small and unaided resources could do little more than protest to the authorities in Holland. This was done from time to time, but little satisfaction or amelioration of their condition was the result. To give evidence of their smothered discontent or to murmur against these unjust proceedings entailed confiscation of their all, separation from their families and possible exile to the Mauritius or other penal station. Such, generally speaking, was the relative position of the Government and its European subjects. There was one obvious solution of these difficulties which presented itself, and that was to move away from the influence of Table Bay and to seek liberty in more remote regions. This was done, and thus began the trekking system, so characteristic a feature of later Boer history. From 1710 to 1715 many of the farmers from Waveren, as the district of Tulbagh was then called, were gradually drifting down the valley of the Breede River, while from Hottentots Holland some were gradually making their way along the course of the Zonderend River, a tributary of the Breede. By 1745 this eastern migration had become sufficiently extensive to warrant the formation of a third district, and in that year the village and magisterial division of Swellendam came into existence. It comprised the strip of country contained between the south coast and Zwartbergen range of mountains, but with no definite boundary towards the east. The total number of the white population at this time was about 4,000 burghers and 1,500 servants of the Company.

In the early periods of this outward move, the burghers obtained an informal sanction to occupy new lands and pastures under a somewhat indefinite understanding that they were held during the pleasure of the Company. But when, some

years later, more remote districts were reached, all considerations of permission to occupy, boundaries, and rent were entirely ignored. The extent of the country seemed illimitable, and the farmers helped themselves liberally to the land. Their cattle runs were probably never less than 5,000 or 6,000 acres, and afterwards certainly more, for which, when it could be recovered, a yearly rental of £2 10 was paid until 1732 and £5 thereafter.<sup>1</sup> In consequence of the increasing extent of country over which the white population were becoming scattered, and the increasing difficulty of control by the authorities at the Cape, endeavours were made from time to time to prevent further dispersion by the issue of "placaats" forbidding any further eastern move and prescribing boundaries over which the wanderers were prohibited from passing. But once beyond Swellendam and in the vast regions which afterwards became the districts of Graaff Reinet and Uitenhage, the burghers felt they could treat all such orders with contempt, knowing well that there was no longer any possibility of the penalties being enforced. These farmers, or Boers, thus came to lead a semi-nomadic existence, wandering about from place to place with their flocks and herds as better pastures and more water tempted them. "Many men and women were thus undergoing a special training for pushing their way deeper into the continent. They were learning to relish a diet of little else than animal food, and to use the flesh of game largely in order to spare their flocks and herds. They were becoming accustomed also to live in tent-waggons for months together, so that the want of houses soon ceased to be regarded as a matter of much hardship by these dwellers in the wilds. They were acquiring a fondness for the healthy life of the open country, with its freedom from care and restraint, and its simple pleasures. For the town, with its government officials and law agents and tradesmen and speculators of many kinds always seeking to take advantage of their simplicity, they acquired such a dislike that they never visited it when they could avoid doing so. They took with them no other books than the Bible and the Psalms in metre, so their children came to regard education in secular subjects as entirely unnecessary. In self-

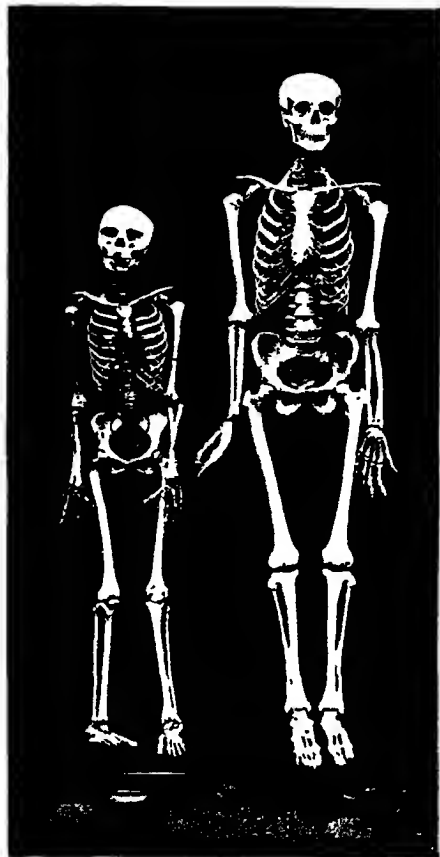
<sup>1</sup> See, however, chap. ix. of this vol. on Land Tenure.

CHAP. I. reliance, however, they were receiving the most complete training possible. The tastes and habits which were thus formed were transmitted to their offspring, and in a few generations there was a body of frontiersmen adapted, as no other Europeans were, for acting as the pioneers of civilisation in such a country as South Africa.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1770 the Gamtoos River was declared the extreme limit of the Colony. In spite of this, however, the Boschberg, now the district of Somerset East, was invaded during the following year, and as “placaats” were ineffectual in producing a retreat, the frontier was pushed still further eastward in July, 1775, by declaring the Great Fish River the eastern limit of the district of Swellendam.

So far no mention has been made of a race, or perhaps races, of African natives, whose uncompromising hostility, not only towards the Europeans, but also towards the various Hottentot tribes, have formed so conspicuous a feature in the early history of South Africa. Van Riebeeck, in becoming better acquainted with the Hottentots, discovered that they had a great dread of a people who inhabited the mountainous districts of the interior, and who continually attacked isolated tribes, making off with the cattle and killing the owners with poisoned arrows. In 1662 the explorer Cruythof, when making his journey northwards, came across some of these people, living like banditti and doing much damage among the tribes of Hottentots and Namaquas with whom they came in contact. On night while the members of his expedition were lying round the watch fire, a shower of arrows was poured into them and four of them severely wounded. Lieutenant Cruse, during his famous expedition to Mossel Bay in 1668, had obtained some cattle in friendly barter from the Hottentots inhabiting those regions and was on his return journey when a party of these wild people approached them. Refusing all the peaceful and friendly overtures of the Dutchmen, they commenced an attack and could not be driven off until a volley had been fired at them and some of them killed. Shortly after this, three burghers crossing the Hottentots Holland Mountains were met by a party of these people; all three were murdered without, as far as is known, any offence whatever having been given.

<sup>1</sup> Theal, *History of South Africa*, vol. i., p. 384.



BUSHMAN AND EUROPEAN SKELETONS COMPARED.

*Photo by Hepburn & Juanes. From the Specimens in the  
Albany Museum, Grahamstown.*



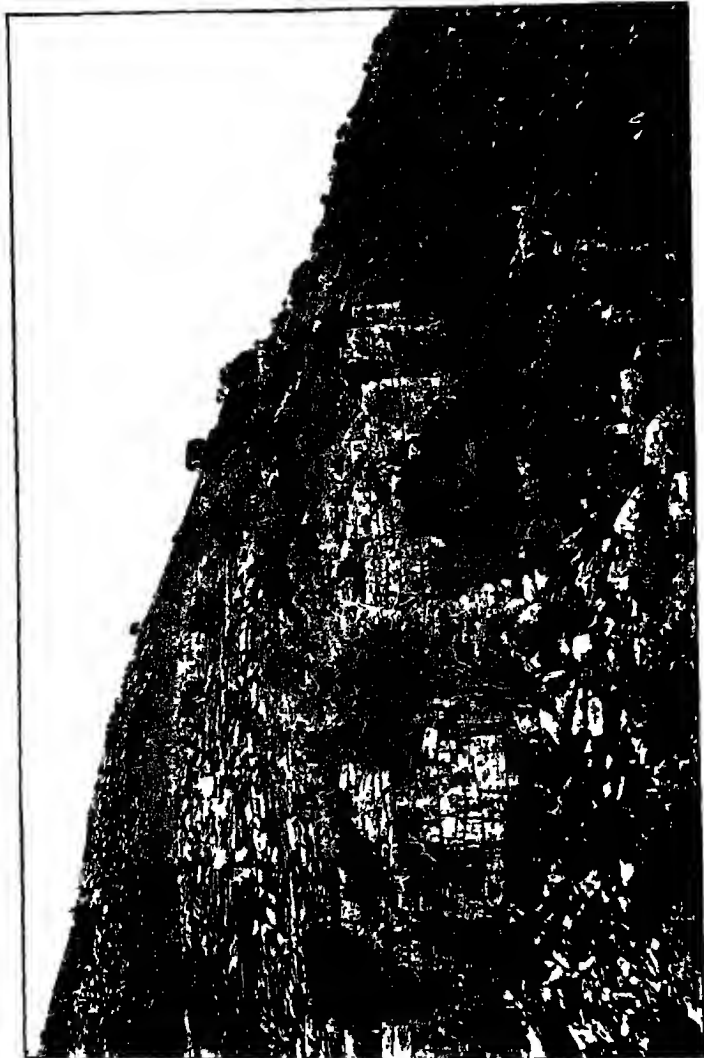


Photo 11 White Corps, Esq. V 1 1 K 1 b 1

A BUSHMAN CAVE WITH PUNING, AT COLDSRING, NEAR GRAHAMSTOWN

(The Cave is where the figures are seen sitting)

These desperate creatures, who seemed to regard all other forms of human life as their mortal enemies, were called by the Hottentots, Sonqua or murderers, by the Dutch, Bosjesmans or Bushmen. They were a small dwarfish race, of a dirty yellow or sallow brown colour. The average height of the men, according to the traveller Barrow, was four feet six inches and that of the women four feet. The countenance was crafty and repulsive, with large prominent cheek-bones and receding chin. They were beardless and the hair of the head consisted of small isolated tufts. The stomach protruded inordinately and the hinder parts were thick, while their limbs were thin and wiry and enabled them to climb and run up the rocky eminences of the mountains almost as nimbly as baboons. Their dwellings were either the natural caves found in the krantzes of hills and mountains or the simplest of stick and mat huts, which could be erected and taken down with very little trouble. The caves are generally situated at some considerable altitude above the surrounding country, and were probably chosen on account of the extensive views which they commanded. The eagle-eyed inhabitants would thus be enabled to observe both the movements of the game and the approach of their enemies. In these caves may yet be found rough paintings, which, if they were not merely decorative, may have served as a crude record. The life of the Bushmen in many respects resembled that of the wild animals whose rivals they were in the pursuit of the game in which the country abounded. When the hunt failed and when no cattle could be stolen from the farmers, they would eat many kinds of crawling and flying creatures. Lizards, locusts, grasshoppers of various kinds, snakes, poisonous as well as innocuous, also the chrysalides of ants, sometimes known as Bushman rice, and roots of various kinds formed from time to time their bill of fare. Feast and famine were as day and night to them. When food was plentiful they gorged to beyond repletion and, taking no thought for the morrow, would allow what could not be eaten to be destroyed. When food was scarce, they were capable of enduring great privation and of being very active withal. Their only weapons were bows and poisoned arrows, which were equally effective against the animals of the bush and the scantily clad Hottentot.

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I.

According to the authority Stow, the Bushmen were the aborigines of South Africa, and had been in occupation of the country for a vast period of time before the Hottentots and other tribes migrated south. He bases this opinion chiefly on stone weapons and other remains which he found in the earth some feet below the surface, and he argues "that the hunters (Bushmen) who manufactured these weapons must have lived in a period so remote, that the physical features of the country were vastly different from what we see at the present". Excepting the few tribes of Hottentots who occupied the coast regions, these were the only inhabitants of the middle and eastern parts of the Colony during the Dutch migration. No great prophetic power is needed to predict what will happen when a pastoral people, possessing good flocks and herds, come into the neighbourhood of such tribes as the Bushmen. Van Riebeeck, writing in his journal of the first ten years of the settlement, certainly before the Dutch had come into hostile contact with them, says, "they never had any other means of subsistence than plunder, their stock was not their own, but robbed from the Cochoqua (Hottentots) and others". Stow, who champions their cause, speaks of "their unalterable determination to maintain or die in their primitive mode of life," "and their utter contempt—at least of the majority of them—for all pastoral and agricultural pursuits". The primitive mode of life, which had resulted in predatory attacks on the Hottentots, for probably a great number of years before the arrival of the Dutch, came into operation against the migrating farmers; and thus the great historical Bushman trouble began. Lurking in krantzes, in the bush or wherever they could find concealment, this wily enemy, always hungry, and ever on the watch for an opportunity, would pounce down and seize, not merely an occasional sheep or ox, but as many as possible of the whole herd; and not infrequently set fire to a dwelling and murder defenceless women and children. The seats of magistracy at the Cape, Stellenbosch, and latterly Swellendam, were, generally speaking, far removed from the places where these scenes of violence occurred. And in the absence of other organisation for the protection of person and property, the Boers had no alternative but to take the law into their own hands. The farmers lived at considerable distances from one



Photo 1 W Rogers 1904 M 1 D N. Geological Commission

LAGO PURL BLOOD "BUSHMEN" LIVING AT THE PURL BLOOD



another, and combination, therefore, was a matter of difficulty and great inconvenience. The first expeditions against the Bushmen were on a small scale, consisting probably of the male members of the robbed family. But increasing familiarity with the difficulties and dangers involved, fostered the growth of combinations of farmers for mutual assistance. Their self-imposed duties were by no means light. They journeyed for days and sometimes weeks over very considerable tracts of country, at times suffering much hardship from the weather, from want of water and from scarcity of food. Added to this, there was the danger of following up such a people as the Bushmen into their native fastnesses, where they could never be seen if they wished to remain hidden, but from which the flight of poisoned arrows indicated the risk of proceeding farther. A fight usually ensued in which some of the farmers would probably be wounded, and a number of the Bushmen were sure to be killed. After all this trouble, fatigue and bloodshed, a few head of the stolen cattle might be recovered, but more often none at all. The depredators usually killed all they captured—and at times with most shocking cruelty; ate what they could and allowed the bodies of the remainder to putrefy, or to be devoured by the wolves and jackals. The robbers were not intimidated, nor was peace secured by these raids. Depredations became more frequent and extensive, and these in turn led to increased activities on the part of the farmers. This was the beginning of the Commando System. In the early days of this trouble, these commandos were unofficial—that is to say, they were undertaken without the knowledge or authority of the Government. To obtain official permission in each particular case was obviously out of the question, as the Cape was so far away and the promptest action was necessary. Further, the Government itself was not in a position to provide soldiers or anything of the nature of a police force for the maintenance of order, and the only course open—excepting that of allowing the Bushmen to exterminate the Dutch—was to sanction the farmers' efforts. The most trustworthy of the Boer farmers were appointed field-commandants, who were authorised to call out men for this service. The Government, while counselling them to do all in their power to maintain order and to avoid hostilities, itself

CHAP.  
I.

CHAP. I. provided gunpowder, flints and lead. In spite of these Government commandos, however, there was no abatement in the career of spoliation which was the result of that "unalterable determination to maintain or die in their primitive mode of life". The white inhabitants, with an equally unalterable determination not to die at the hands of the Bushmen or to tolerate their systematic plunder, were driven in self-defence to the necessity of clearing the districts of depredators. Armed parties—consisting of farmers and Hottentots—went forth, and encountering hordes of these people, shot down the men and took the women and children into captivity. Awful as this alternative was, it is difficult to find it other than inevitable. The generally defenceless state of the farmers and the uncompromisingly savage character of the Bushmen made the coexistence of both an impossibility, and led to a continuous warfare which could only cease with the expulsion or extermination of the one or of the other. The extent of this state of things may be judged from the following typical instances. In 1754 very extensive depredations had taken place in the Roggeveld district. On one occasion some hundreds of cattle had been driven off by the Bushmen. An expedition of Boers from Stellenbosch and Tulbagh set out and were away from their homes for six weeks. Travelling in difficult country, suffering from want of water, climbing difficult and hazardous places, they recovered only seven head of cattle. One Boer and two Hottentots were wounded and sixty-four of the enemy killed. Shortly after this, 400 more cattle were driven off and were followed for fourteen days. Most of these were recovered and fifty-six Bushmen were shot. In 1774 a very extensive movement was organised under one Gotlieb Rudolph Opperman. The force consisted of a large number of farmers, Hottentots and half-castes. They operated over about 300 miles of country, killing 503 Bushmen and taking 239 prisoners. But even this had little deterrent effect. Depredations increased in extent, frequency, audacity and violence—so much so that farmers in some districts were compelled to abandon their dwellings and repair to safer regions. Barrow, in this connection, observes: "An inhabitant of the Sneeuwberg not only lives under constant apprehension of losing his property, but is perpetually exposed to the danger of being put to death. If he has occa-

sion to go to the distance of 500 yards from his house, he is under the necessity of carrying a musket. He can neither plough, nor sow, nor reap without being under arms. If he would gather a few greens in the garden he must take his gun in hand. To endure such a life of constant dread and anxiety, a man must be accustomed to it from his infancy and unacquainted with one that is better."<sup>1</sup>

CHAP.  
I.

As it became more and more impossible for small parties to resist the Bushmen incursions, the commando system developed almost into a permanent burgher militia, the harassed farmers being liable at any moment to be called upon to leave farm and family for dangerous expeditions of indefinite duration. "It was a service at all times taken with reluctance, especially by such as were least exposed to the attacks of the savages."<sup>2</sup> In the reports of the field-commandants to the Government, there were "many complaints regarding the disinclination of farmers to go on commando. Excuses of all descriptions, as well as open declarations of defiance and determination not to go on duty."<sup>3</sup>

The results of these hostile relations between Boer and Bushmen during the last ten years of the Company's rule (1785 to 1795) are as follows: Horses killed by Bushmen, 309; taken and not recaptured, 308. Cattle: 1,891 killed, 16,742 taken. Sheep: 3,895 killed, 73,281 taken. Further, 276 persons had been murdered. On the other side of the account: 163 Bushmen killed in pursuit, 2,341 on commando, or a total of 2,504 killed; and 669 taken prisoners. When, in 1795, the rule of the Netherlands East India Company came to an end, and the Colony became a dependency of the British Empire, a more humane policy was inaugurated. Beginning in the north-eastern districts the white inhabitants endeavoured to gain the friendship of the Bushmen. The effort was attended with some success. Murders and robberies greatly diminished in number. At a still later date, missionary stations were established at Toornberg and Hephzibah, in the country to the north of Colesberg. But the trouble did not entirely cease until some years subsequently, when the whole race had almost

<sup>1</sup> *Travels*, vol. i., p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> Barrow's *Travels*, vol. i., p. 189.

<sup>3</sup> Wilmot and Chase, *Hist. of Cape Colony*, 1869, p. 194.



CHAP. I. suffered annihilation. To-day Bushmen of pure blood are very few and far between.

From the foregoing it will have been gathered that one of the most characteristic, and at the same time one of the most permanent, features of early South African history was native trouble in some form or other. As new regions came to be occupied and new peoples met with, so new phases of this feature presented themselves. In the earliest years of the settlement, it was the Hottentot, then—as the burgher farmers scattered—the Bushmen trouble became more and more prominent, and this in its turn gave place to the much larger and more enduring conflict with the Kaffir. The first contact of Europeans with the Kaffirs was in the beginning of the eighteenth century, in the course of expeditions to still farther eastern regions, in search of cattle, ivory or any other valuable which could be purchased for the usual articles of barter. This contact seems to have taken place in 1702, when a large party consisting of Dutch and Hottentots set out from Stellenbosch and penetrated as far as the Great Fish River. Kaffirs were met with, a quarrel followed, and barter took the form of exchange of bullets for assegais. At this date, however, the Kaffirs were not in possession of the Fish River country in which this party found them, but were probably, like the white men, on some exploratory or hunting expedition from regions of which they had not long been in possession—perhaps the present Transkeian territories. Generally speaking, this was the nature of the relations which existed between the white inhabitants and the Kaffirs until some years after the beginning of the nineteenth century. Parties, authorised and unauthorised, made expeditions into Kaffirland—as the country east of the Fish River indiscriminately was called; some with the object of elephant hunting as well as to procure the ivory which had already been obtained by the natives, others to trade in cattle and perhaps to endeavour to recover their own cattle which also had been “obtained” by the Kaffirs. More often than not, negotiations which appeared to be progressing harmoniously would end in a quarrel. Often, too, it was a sudden change of sentiment on the part of the Kaffirs that led to an attack on the traders before they were out of the country, and thus blood would be shed on both sides.





VIEW ON GREAT FISH RIVER, WITH THE KALIES HUNTING ELEPHANTS  
*From the Original Painting in the possession of H. D. Hunt, of Cape Town*

The Kaffir, in many respects, formed a great contrast with the ill-conditioned Hottentot and puny Bushman, as the migratory farmers eventually found to their cost. Tall, well-proportioned, athletic and of fine physique, they were always prepared for a fight, and ever as ready to act on the offensive as on the defensive. Their daring rendered them a people with whom it was imprudent for a community even more capable of defence than the farmers to incur hostile relations. By their combination and military tactics, they could become a foe upon whom a commando could make but little effect. This was rendered very evident at the commencement of the 1835 war. Their well-laid plans, which must have taken considerable time to hatch, involved simultaneous operations along a line of frontier extending from the Winterberg to the sea, a distance of about ninety miles; and in little more than a week the Kaffir was in almost complete possession of the districts of Albany, Bathurst and Alexandria.

The early history of a nation which possesses no written language cannot but be involved in the utmost uncertainty and obscurity. At any time there will always be old people who, having received the traditions of the race, pass them on to succeeding generations. But the records thus perpetuated are always untrustworthy, and the more so the more remote the period in which the events recorded are alleged to have taken place. Under such circumstances, the only source of authentic information on which the historian and ethnologist can base any reasonable conjecture, is the study of the language and customs of the generation living at the time when the earliest investigation was made. Such is the case with the Kaffirs. Although nothing for certain is known concerning their origin and whence they came, there is no doubt but that they did not occupy the present Transkeian territories until comparatively recent times. In 1809 Colonel Collins, who made an extended tour of exploration and inquiry in the eastern districts, on behalf of the Colonial Government, met with a Boer, ninety-five years of age, who remembered an elephant-hunting expedition into Kaffirland which he had made in 1738. According to the old man, no Kaffirs were at that date residing in the country west of the Keiskamma.<sup>1</sup> It is extremely probable that this race re-

<sup>1</sup> This old man was probably one of the party, consisting of eleven white men and a band of Hottentots, under the leadership of a Boer named Hubner. They

CHAP. I. presents the most advanced portions of tribes which, in remote periods, have migrated from the north, and in their movement southward have gradually peopled the countries on the eastern coast of the African continent. The Zulus, Pondos, Tembus, and even the Swahilis of Zanzibar are offshoots of the same parent stock. In their general mode of life, their forms of government, their social and tribal customs, the Kaffirs have little in common with the Hottentots and Bushmen; in comparison with them they may be considered almost civilised. A Semitic origin is supposed to be indicated by the importance which they attached to the practice of circumcision, accompanied by rites and ceremonies of a semi-religious character;<sup>1</sup> also to the system of *ukulobola*—the so-called purchase of wives for cattle, and other customs which seem to be a survival from a more civilised state of the race. These uses have become modified and perhaps degraded in consequence of long separation from the parent stock and the new conditions of life brought about by migration into far distant lands. The Kaffirs do not speak of themselves by this name, but derive their national designation, Amaxosa, from a traditional chief, Xosa, of whom indeed nothing more than his name is known. No reliance can be placed on any statement regarding Kaffir ancestry of an earlier date than the middle of the seventeenth century. About 1680, one Togu is said to have been the paramount chief of the Amaxosa. He was succeeded by his son Gconde, who, about the beginning of the eighteenth century, was located with his tribe on the banks of the Umtata River. From this time onward, information concerning these people is more accessible and sufficiently trustworthy to be considered matter for history. On the death of Gconde the chieftainship fell to his son Tzeeo or Tshiwo.

The Kaffirs in their uncivilised state are polygamous. Arising out of this, there are peculiar customs in connection with the succession of the chiefs, which tend to break up the tribes into smaller and independent ones of nearly equal power. Among the wives of a paramount chief, one was the "great

started from the Gauritz River, which, at the date referred to, was considered the eastern frontier of the Colony, and travelled, probably, as far as Pondoland. On the return journey they were attacked by Palo's people. Col. Collins' informant must have been one of the few survivors (see Theal, vol. ii., p. 22).

<sup>1</sup> See the illustration,



*Photo By J. Lemmon, 1904.*

THE "UMTSHILO WABAKWETA" OR CIRCUMCISION DANCE



wife" (umfazi omkulu); her eldest son was presumptive heir to the paramountcy. The "great wife" was, in most cases, the last one taken. She was chosen on political grounds, by the chief councillors, and perhaps without even consulting the wishes of the chief himself. It was not an unknown event for such a chief to be taken by surprise by seeing a bridal party arrive, bringing some other chief's daughter, whom he had never seen before, but to refuse whom might be considered an insult to the tribe to which she belonged. It not infrequently happened therefore that the heir to the sovereignty was a minor when the father died and the government would thus have to be entrusted to an uncle or elder brother. Of the earlier wives, one held the rank of "wife of the right-hand house" (umfazi owasekunene), and later in the history of these people a new dignity was created in a "wife of the left-hand house" or representative of the ancients (umfazi owasexibeni), but held a subordinate position to the other two. When a great chief died, portions of the tribe over which he had ruled were allotted to the eldest sons of the right- and left-hand wives, so that besides the "house" in the direct line two new ones would be formed, which although independent of the "great house," acknowledged its precedency. All the Kaffir chiefs therefore were related by blood. In accordance with this principle, Tshiwo left Palo as his successor in the direct line and Umdange<sup>1</sup>—the founder of the Imidange tribe—his "right-hand" son. An important feature of Kaffir national character was the love of pre-eminence and political power in the tribal organisations: and, as is not infrequently the case in more civilised communities, the most unscrupulous means were at times adopted to attain to position and authority. Greater moral courage than was to be expected in the barbarian was required to restrain those who had been appointed as regents from abusing their trust by refusing to relinquish the reins of office when the rightful heir was competent to assume them. Intrigue, conspiracies, and even murder were means resorted to for the accomplishment of ambitious ends. Palo, the great

<sup>1</sup> Col. Maclean in the genealogy of the Kaffir chiefs compiled by him in 1858, and Col. Collins in his genealogy of 1809, places Umdange as the son of Tshiwo, while Rev. H. H. Dugmore and Dr. Theal show him as son of Gconde, i.e., as brother and not son of Tshiwo.



CHAP. I. son of Tshiwo, was not born when his father died. The right-hand son, Gwali, was then a man in the prime of life, and would have been the successor of Tshiwo had Palo not been born. In order to gain the eminence which had been so nearly his by right, he endeavoured to make away with his baby half-brother. The intention, however, was discovered, and the consequent resentment of the tribe compelled him, with his adherents, to escape from the country. They were joined by a number of another tribe and, crossing the Kei, travelled as far west as the site of the present town of Somerset East, where they took refuge among some Hottentot clans. This was in the year 1702. Palo therefore became head of the nation. During his lifetime, *viz.*, from 1702 until 1775, the gradual western movement of the Kaffirs continued,—Palo himself taking part in this to the extent of placing his location in the Izeli district near King William's Town. As has been shown, the white inhabitants of the Colony were simultaneously moving eastward.

The sons of Palo figure conspicuously in the early annals of the Eastern Province. Gcaleka, a great son, and founder of the powerful tribe of the Amagcaleka, or Galekas, inherited the larger number of his father's vassals. He lost much of his influence with his followers, partly on account of his uniting the profitable practice of witch doctor with that of paramount chief—professions which usually mutually supported one another, but probably in no other instance found combined in the same person; and partly on account of the popularity of his right-hand brother Rarabe, who was enterprising, brave, and, in short, who was possessed of those personal charms which, in Kaffir estimation, were the highest attributes of man.

Gcaleka crossed the Kei some time before 1750 and settled in the present district of Komgha, where he died and was buried, about 1790.

Rarabe, the right-hand son of Palo, in consequence of the extraordinary influence he exercised, became a most powerful chief. The increasing numbers which joined his tribe encouraged him to commence hostilities against his lord paramount; and thus a civil war of great bitterness waged between the Amangcaleka and Amrarabe. Between 1770 and 1775 Rarabe lived in the country between the Tsomo and

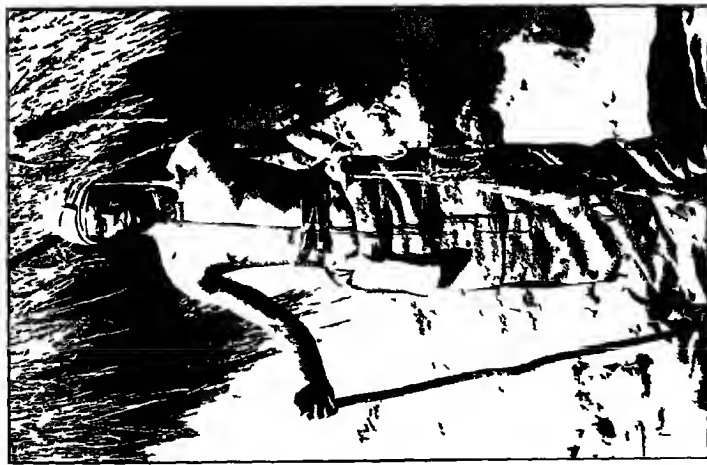


Photo V1 Leonard, Ba'fou  
A KALLIR MAN

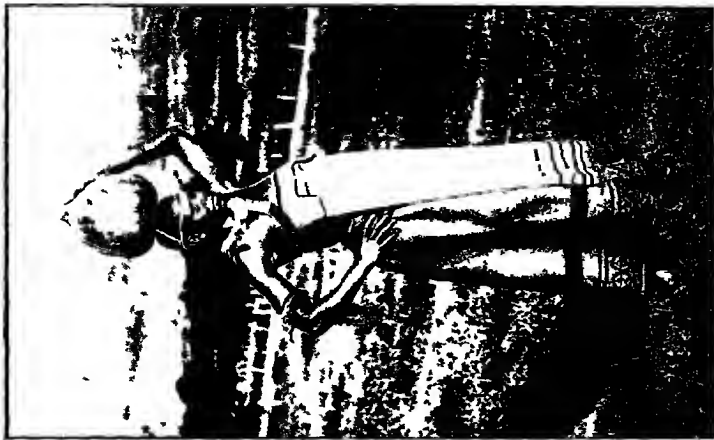


Photo V1 Leonard Ba'fou  
A KALLIR WOMAN WITH CALABASH



White Kei, and afterwards took up his residence on the site of the present town of Butterworth. Between 1781 and 1785 he became involved in a dispute with the Tambookies. One of his sons had been killed by a chief of that tribe, on a hunting expedition according to some, according to others on some mission connected with procuring a wife. Rarabe journeyed forth to avenge his son's death and was himself killed with assegais in the fight which ensued.<sup>1</sup> There was a third son of Palo, who became an important personage. This was Langa, who, although he had no legal status as a chief—not being a son of one of the great wives—was nevertheless placed at the head of a tribe called the Amambala, the proper chief of which had died and left no issue. Langa, with his followers, quietly migrated to the country between the Buffalo and Keiskamma Rivers, where also the Imjdange clan under Umdange had previously settled at the death of Tshiwo. This part of the country became the arena of much strife, and in consequence of the weaker parties having at different times to find peace elsewhere, the distant Zuurveld—the present districts of Albany, Bathurst, and Alexandria—became inhabited by Kaffirs. Thus arose the lasting troubles between the white and black races. The mantle of Gcaleka fell upon Kauta, who was of a pacific disposition, and does not seem to have been conspicuous for any particular good or evil. He dwelt at Ecwa or Butterworth, where he died in 1804, leaving as his great son a small child, Hintsa, who afterwards became famous in connection with the war of 1835. The line of Gcaleka practically ends with Kreli, son of Hintsa, who died only a few years ago. The Amangcaleka were essentially a Transkeian tribe, and in consequence of their distance from the Colony, did not play so prominent a part in the early Colonial troubles as the Amara-rabe—except perhaps as receivers of stolen cattle and aiders and abettors of those who lived in the regions to the west of the Kei.

The evils arising from the struggle for power, combined with the opportunities offered to an able and ambitious man to take advantage of the minority of a hereditary chief, were at no time more pronounced than in the case of the descendants

<sup>1</sup> Col. Collins says drowned in the Tsomo.

CHAP. I. of Rarabe. The great son Umlao died before Rarabe was killed by the Tambookies, and left, as heir, an infant son, Ngqika or Gaika.<sup>1</sup> Umlao's younger brother, also a son of the "great wife," was Ndhlabi. He would have succeeded as paramount chief of all the Amararabe had Ngqika not been born. Ndhlabi was a man of considerable ability and withal a bold warrior; albeit at times his valour got the better of his discretion and brought about disaster. He became the most powerful chief in Kaffirland and the one who gave the greatest trouble, both directly and indirectly, to the British Government in subsequent years. During the minority of Gaika, Ndhlabi was entrusted with the guardianship of the young chief and the government of the tribe. His popularity gathered around him a very numerous and loyal party during his regency, and to add further to his power and influence, Cebo, the right-hand son of Rarabe, had died childless and left no other legal successor to his portion of the tribe. Ndhlabi therefore, with the promptness to take advantage of opportunities which always characterised his actions, placed his own son Dushani in that position and thus increased the number of his own adherents.

When Gaika became old enough to take the reins of government into his own hands, Ndhlabi found himself sufficiently powerful to refuse to resign. The conservatism of the race, however, revolting at this breach of the immemorial custom, raised up a strong party determined to resist this usurpation and place Gaika at the head of the Amararabe. The result of this conflict was a war in 1796 in which Gaika

<sup>1</sup>According to Kaffir tradition of the present day, it would appear that Gaika did not gain his position in the tribe entirely on the ground of birth, if at all, but on the arbitrary dictate of Kauta. The tale goes that Kauta paid a visit of condolence to those who were mourning the deaths of Rarabe, Umlao and Cebo and at the same time took upon himself the duty of appointing the new chief. The clans having assembled and indulged in the dances usual on great occasions, four men chosen by the people approached Kauta and drew his attention to two boys who were sitting upon the ground apart from the rest. Their names were Ntumbo and Ngqika (Gaika). The delegates stated that the people desired Ntumbo as their new leader. Kauta went up to the boys and taking from his own neck a necklace of large red (royal) beads, fastened it upon the neck of *Ngqika*. On Ntumbo's neck he placed a necklace of small beads and taking an arrow from an attendant placed it in his right hand, and then without speaking turned and walked away. By this it was understood that Ngqika was elected to rule the people in place of Umlao.

was victorious, took his uncle Ndhlabi prisoner, and kept him in captivity for about two years. Gaika treated Ndhlabi with great consideration and kindness, allowing him to keep all his cattle, wives, and even consulting him on matters of the government of the tribe. The missionary Vanderkemp states that when Gaika formally released Ndhlabi, he thus addressed him: "Uncle, I thank you for the education you have given me, which has taught me to acquit myself with honour as a sovereign. For this I will forget that you ever acted unkindly towards me, and deal with you as you yourself have taught me to do. In like manner do you learn of me to behave as becomes a true and faithful subject." From the capture of Ndhlabi the bitterest of feuds raged between his adherents and those of Gaika, so that the nation of the Amara-rabe became the two powerful tribes of the Amangqika or Gaikas, and Amandhlambi.

CHAP.  
I.

As will have been seen from the foregoing, new tribes came into existence in consequence of the subdivision of a large one at the death of the chief. The chiefs themselves, no matter how petty, belonged to the ruling class and could show consanguinity with the great ones of the past. There was one remarkable exception to the rule,—this was a case in which a man not of "royal" blood became the founder of a very numerous and powerful tribe. The circumstances attending the origin of this tribe are of peculiar interest. Among the many barbarous customs arising out of the superstition of the Kaffirs, there was one called *Umhlahlo* or "smelling out" for witchcraft. When any sickness or other unaccountable misfortune had befallen an individual, it was invariably ascribed to the evil influence exerted by an *umtakati* or "witch"; the remedy therefore was to find out or "smell out" the witch from among the neighbours of the injured party. To this end the services of a "witch doctor" (*igqira*) were requisitioned. The people of the "infected" kraal, together with as many of their friends and neighbours as cared to attend, proceeded in a body to the kraal of the "doctor" who was to be employed. The spectators, among whom was the unsuspecting victim, formed themselves into a circle; the women droning a peculiar, weird, monotonous chant, at the same time clapping their hands, while the men added to the harmony by striking to-

CHAP. I. together their assegais and perhaps beating on hide drums. After a time, the "doctor," arrayed in his odds and ends of skins, jackal tails, knuckle bones, and all the rest of his finery, sprang into the circle and jumped about in the most frantic manner, working himself up into a frenzy, the spectators sharing his excitement. Having been wrought up to the proper pitch of inspiration, his antics suddenly ceased, and the terrible moment for some one had arrived. The *iggira* indicated who the witch was—either by mentioning his name or by pointing to him. Immediately all those near the accused would retire, leaving him standing quite alone. It need hardly be said that the unfortunate creature who became thus distinguished was innocent of what he was accused. By way of punishment his property was confiscated, and he himself was put to death under circumstances of the most inhuman cruelty. This was known technically as "being eaten up". This custom was mainly responsible for the origin of the new tribe referred to, *viz.*, the Amangqunukwebi. During the chieftainship of Tshiwo, one of the *amapakati* or councillors was a man named Kwane. He was a favourite with the chief and generally popular with the masses. This was probably due to the greater regard for the sacredness of human life which distinguished him from the majority of the uncivilised Kaffirs. To Kwane was delegated the duty of carrying into effect the sentences of the *Umhlahlo*, in fulfilment of which, however, he omitted putting the accused to death, but, instead, connived at their escape to the mountainous regions towards the Orange River. His own influence and the popularity of his innovation enabled him to continue thus for a number of years. The refugees from "justice" lived in a kind of outlawry, and were joined from time to time by others from all tribes, who for a variety of reasons had fled from their homes. A considerable number of people thus became gathered together, ever on the watch and ready to take desperate measures to avoid the fate which awaited them should they be discovered and recaptured.

After some years of seclusion, they were finally brought from their retreat by Kwane at a time when Tshiwo was in open war with his neighbours and sorely needed reinforcements. The whole of these people gave the required assistance, and so gratified was Tshiwo that he constituted them a separate

tribe with Kwane as their head. By 1850 the tribe numbered about 15,000 and occupied the coast country from the mouth of the Fish River almost up to the mouth of the Buffalo. This tribe is of interest and importance in an account of the early relations of the white to the black populations of the East, because portions of that tribe were the first Kaffirs to definitely occupy the Zuurveld. CHAP.  
I.

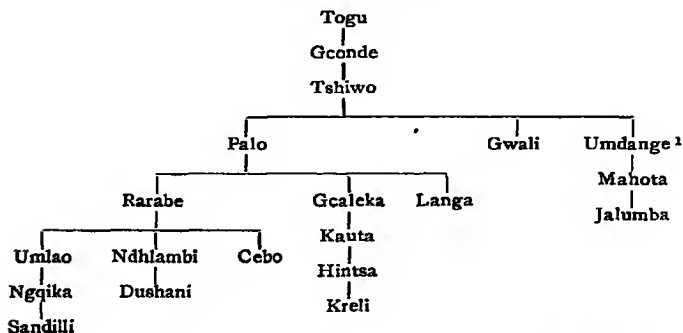
The son, or grandson of Kwane—it is not easy to decide which—was named Tshaka, and having been received into favour by Tshiwo's successor, Palo, was made captain of the chief's cattle. At first he settled down on the lands along the Beka River in the present district of Peddie, but after a time made better acquaintance with the country westward in consequence of the periodical hunting expeditions which he made into the Zuurveld—the country immediately west of the Fish River. He then came in contact with the Hottentots, who at that date were the sole inhabitants of those regions, and were under a chief named Ruiter. In the first instances Tshaka paid for the permission to hunt in that country; but eventually he dispensed with all such formality and permanently took up his residence in Ruiter's territory. Ruiter himself, however, was only an intruder and probably had as little right of occupation as Tshaka. He was formerly an inhabitant of the Roggeveld, whence he had fled for safety, having been guilty of murder. He seems to have been a man of parts, for he gained an ascendancy over the legitimate inhabitants and became acknowledged as their chief and "owner" of the country.

The invasion of the Zuurveld by Tshaka soon led to hostilities between himself and Ruiter. Tshaka was unable to return to his own territory as it had been invaded by Ndhlabi, who, besides preventing Tshaka from returning, had also driven Langa and Mahota, the son of Umdange, into the Zuurveld. Ruiter fled to the fastnesses of the Bushman's River, where he died shortly afterwards. Tshaka endeavoured to establish his right to the Zuurveld against the pretensions of Langa and Mahota by stating that he had bought it from Ruiter. Colonel Collins, investigating this statement in 1809, met with some of Ruiter's immediate descendants and they declared that Tshaka had not spoken the truth. This point is of importance, because when—a few years later—an English force went to



CHAP. I. clear the district of Kaffirs, some of the most upright burghers—among whom was the elder Stockenstrom—had conscientious objections to taking part in the campaign on the ground that the Kaffirs were being deprived of land which they had acquired by honest purchase. When Tshaka died he was succeeded by his son Cungwa (usually called Congo), who lived nearly all his life in the Zuurveld. His sons were Pato, Kama and Cobus Congo—prominent names in the early Kaffir wars.

SHORT GENEALOGY OF THE IMPORTANT KAFFIR CHIEFS.



By 1778 the roving white population had become in a measure permanently established in the present Eastern Province. In consequence of the great distances to the nearest magistracies of Stellenbosch and Swellendam—journeys seldom performed in less than a month—and of the danger and difficulties of travelling in those days, the establishment of a landdrost's court with the concomitants of church and school became necessary. In order to bring about such a measure, a petition was transmitted to the authorities in March of 1778. At the seat of Government in the West, little was accurately known as to the conditions of life in the East, and only the vaguest ideas were entertained of even the direction and distance of the frontier regions, which were indiscriminately denominated the "interior". To gain authentic information on

<sup>1</sup> According to Rev. H. H. Dugmore, Umdange was right-hand son of Gconde, but according to Col. Maclean and also Col. Collins he was son of Tshiwo and grandson of Gconde.

these matters as well as to investigate the native troubles and also to judge of the expediency of granting what the farmers had petitioned for, the governor, Joachim van Plettenberg, made an extended and costly tour eastwards at the latter end of 1778. Travelling by way of Tulbagh basin and the Karoo, he made his headquarters for a time at the foot of the Sneeuwberg Mountains, near the present town of Graaff Reinet. Pushing farther to the north to the Seacow River—a tributary of the Orange—he caused a beacon to be erected to mark the northernmost limit of the Colony. Then, visiting the farm of Willem Prinsloo in the Boschberg—on which the town of Somerset East now stands—he proceeded due south to Algoa Bay and returned by a coast route to the Cape. Nothing of any great importance was accomplished during the expedition, though it is of historical interest from the fact that the head of the Government for the first time travelled to the far East and sanctioned the permanent occupation of territories, entrance to which had been strictly prohibited only a few years before. It is also interesting from the fact that the regions as far east as the Great Fish River become officially recognised—though not lawfully proclaimed until November 14th, 1780—as forming part of the Cape Settlement. Various tribes of Kaffirs were found living in a somewhat unsettled state in the country as far west as the Sunday's River. Attempts were made to persuade them to retire to the territories east of the Fish River from which they had migrated only shortly before, and to regard that river as the boundary of the Colony, but these were attended with no conspicuous success.

The governor approved of the desired formation of a seat of magistracy, but was not empowered to establish it without reference to the authorities in Holland. It was only too evident that for all religious and civil purposes, the drostdies of Stellenbosch and Swellendam were too far distant. Moreover, the families of the farmers were exposed to the utmost danger from Bushmen while the male inhabitants were drawn off periodically to attend the customary parades and business in the West; furthermore, the distress of the outlying district was aggravated by the presence of a number of worthless Europeans of different nationalities whose wandering and lawless life was a constant menace to all peaceful pursuits. It

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was not until more than seven years after this visit that the measure was carried into effect. The delay arose from a combination of causes. First and foremost, the attention of Holland was engrossed by the strained relations which existed between that country and England. This finally led to war and to the suspension of all communication between the Netherlands and South Africa. There was also internal commotions in the Colony itself, brought about by the unpopularity and alleged misrule of Van Plettenberg. In 1785 he resigned and Cornelius Jacob van der Graaff succeeded him. On December 13th of that year the formal sanction for the establishment of the new drostdy—which was to be on the same footing as those already existing—was issued, and on July 19th, 1786, the boundaries of the new district over which the jurisdiction was to take effect were defined. It was of immense extent, comprising the present districts of Bathurst, Albany, Alexandria, Uitenhage, Prince Albert, Willowmore, Jansenville, Somerset East, Cradock, Graaff Reinet, Aberdeen, Beaufort West, Murraysburg, Richmond, Hanover, Colesberg, Middelburg, Steynsburg, and parts of Tarka and Albert. As landdrost or magistrate, one Herman Otto Woeke, an elderly burgher of Stellenbosch, was appointed. He was instructed to select a suitable site for his headquarters, and thus form the nucleus of a township. The site determined upon was a small plain of about two square miles, partly surrounded by a sharp curve of the Sunday's River, and was at that time a farm in possession of one Dirk Coetsee. Shut in on the east and west by precipitous hills or mountains of some 1,800 feet in height, it is open on the north and south to the Karoo regions beyond. The establishment of the new township having received official sanction it was named GRAAFF REINET in honour of Governor Jacob van der Graaff and his wife, Reinet.

At the date of Mr. Woeke's selection of this tract, it must have appeared as desolate and unfertile as the country which immediately surrounds it. The experience of later years has proved, however, that the choice of this site for the chief town of the new district was a wise one, though the famous traveller Barrow, who visited it in 1797, thought otherwise. No spot for miles around can compete in natural advantages with that on which the town of Graaff Reinet now stands. With a



CAPTAIN (AFTERWARDS COLONEL) JACOB GLEN CUYLER,  
LANDDROST OF UITENHAGE.  
*From a Miniature Painting.*



GOVERNOR VAN DER GRAAFF AND HIS WIFE, REINET.  
*From the Picture in the Town House, Graaff Resnet*



plentiful supply of water the soil is rendered very productive; hundreds of thousands of vines thrive in the many gardens and produce the grapes which have contributed almost as much as the rebellious actions of its early inhabitants to render the place famous. The present town, viewed from the top of the hills which tower above it, forms, with its numerous gardens and luxuriant foliage, a very marked and beautiful contrast with the dry reddish country on which it stands and fully entitles it to be called the "Gem of the Desert".

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Graaff Reiniet began in a modest way. The first houses were of the smallest, built with wattle and daub, upon which there was no improvement for many years. Barrow thus describes the place as he saw it in 1797: "The village of Graaff Reiniet consists of an assemblage of mud huts placed at some distance from each other, in two lines, forming a kind of street. At the upper end stands the house of the landdrost, built also of mud, and a few miserable hovels that were intended as offices for the transaction of public business; most of these had tumbled in, and the rest were in so ruinous a condition as not to be habitable. . . . The village is chiefly inhabited by mechanics and such as hold some petty employment under the landdrost. Its appearance is as miserable as that of the poorest village in England." Further, he accuses the inhabitants of want of industry in not cultivating the arable land and producing the first necessities of life. He says, "neither milk, nor butter, nor cheese, nor vegetables of any kind could be had upon any terms. There is neither butcher, nor chandler, nor grocer, nor baker. Every one must provide for himself as well as he can. They have neither wine nor beer; and the chief beverage is the water of the Sunday River, which in the summer season is strongly impregnated with salt." Barrow, like many other travellers and visitors to South Africa, formed opinions on colonial matters which would probably have been considerably modified had he made the Colony his home and become more intimately acquainted with the conditions under which the people lived. The inhabitants, both of the town and distant parts of the district of Graaff Reiniet, were, at the time of Barrow's visit, extremely poor and the conditions of the country were such as to keep them so. For besides locusts, drought, and other natural disadvantages which farmers

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I. depredations by both Bushmen and Kaffirs made it almost impossible to keep stock of any kind; and the too frequent calls upon their time to go on commando to regain their own or their neighbours' cattle were not conducive to the continuous industry which agriculture demands. These misfortunes, however, were the normal lot of the farming community of the Eastern Province until a very much later period. Graaff Reinet thus became established in 1786, and from that date the Eastern Province may be considered to have had its official existence.

## CHAPTER II.

### EARLY TROUBLES IN GRAAFF REINET.

THE condition of things during the time which elapsed between the visit of Governor Van Plettenberg to the East and the official recognition of Graaff Reinnet as a seat of magistracy was one of increasing lawlessness and strife. It was the period when the Dutch farmers were coming into more intimate contact with the Kaffirs in consequence of the continued eastward migration of the former and of the gradual usurpation of the land west of the Great Fish River by the latter. The so-called treaty which the governor made in 1778, wherein the Kaffirs are said to have agreed to recognise that river as the boundary, was so obviously ineffectual that it could have inspired but little confidence at the time. Had Van Plettenberg been better acquainted with native affairs and known of the divided state of the race and the conflicting interests of the various tribes, he probably would not have made the mistake of considering that an agreement—and that only verbal—made with a few petty chiefs of a single tribe could be binding on all the others. That the Kaffirs themselves did not regard the “treaty” with any great concern is evident from the fact that in the ensuing year, *viz.*, 1779, they poured into the Zuurveld in vastly increased numbers. This was most likely due, not to any defiance of the governor’s injunction, but to the consequences arising from an increasing population requiring more land, coupled, it may be, with a general disposition to quarrel which induced the weaker tribes to remove from the vicinity of the stronger. For some such reason the Imidange tribe under Mahota, the son of Umdange, and the Amambala tribe under Langa, crossed into the Zuurveld, dispossessing the Amangqunukwebi under Tshaka. These latter fled for refuge to the western side of the Bushman’s River. The invaders spread themselves over the southern portion of the proposed new district of Graaff Reinnet, *viz.*, the present districts of Albany, Bathurst and

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CHAP. II. Somerset, where some of the Dutch farmers, with their increasing flocks and herds, were thinly scattered. The invading clans, evidently perceiving the concern which their presence created, hastened to assure the farmers that there was no intention to molest *them*, in demonstration of which kindly feeling, they considerably murdered a number of Hottentots and took *their* cattle. Depredations, however, soon began, and with them all the fears and anxieties which, at an earlier date, had been the result of proximity to the Bushmen. Towards the end of 1779 matters had become so serious that the farmers had to abandon their holdings in the Zuurveld and Bushman's River district and seek safety in other parts. It became necessary to band together for mutual protection and recovery of property, and thus began the commando system against Kaffirs. The first movement of this kind was during the summer of 1779-80, when two commandos were organised with the object of recovering the cattle which had been stolen and driving the depredators back over the Fish River. The operations were not entirely successful; many cattle, indeed, were recaptured, but the Kaffirs managed to elude their pursuers and only a portion were driven back to their own country. These soon returned, bringing with them hundreds more, so that the trouble became worse than ever. In order to tide over the difficulty and introduce some order into the district, pending the decision of the authorities respecting the appointment of a landdrost, the Council of Policy on October 24th, 1780, appointed Adriaan van Jaarsveld commandant, with military authority over the Eastern frontier districts. This man was a prominent burgher, and held in high regard by all. From his earliest years the hardships of the isolated farmer together with the dangers arising from Bushman warfare had been his constant experience. Supported by sufficient authority he was just the man to do all that could be done under the distressing circumstances then existing. According to the instructions which were issued to him, he was to endeavour to remove all cause of offence to both Bushmen<sup>1</sup> and Kaffirs and to use every available means of

<sup>1</sup> Art. 13. No permanent peace can be expected with the roaming and predatory Bosjesmans, who are to be attacked and over-powered in their caves and hiding places; if they will not surrender they may be put to death, and be entirely destroyed; sparing their women, children and infirm men.

establishing peace. The Kaffirs were to be reminded of their promise to the governor to observe the Fish River as the boundary of their territories, and in the event of their breaking faith he was authorised to assemble a "respectable" commando and to enforce compliance. The field-commandant was to refuse curtly if asked to take any part in the native feuds, and to leave the chiefs to fight out the matters of dispute among themselves. In carrying out all this, Van Jaarsveld met with a decided refusal on the part of all the emigrant chiefs, except Langa, the brother of Rarabe, to retrace their steps to Kaffirland. Nothing remained, therefore, but to resort to the last measure and drive them out by force. A commando consisting of ninety-two burghers and forty Hottentots, all mounted and well armed, took the field on May 23rd, 1781. The following is the account of what happened, from the commandant's own report, dated July 20th, 1781. "The Kaffirs having, subsequently to the treaty, again moved in among our people, with all their property, it became of the most urgent necessity that resistance should be offered to their evidently impending violence. Having particularly inquired into all the messages from the Kaffirs as also into the molestation they had committed upon the farms by night, with occupying the farms, and taking away from them by force the faithful servants of the inhabitants, on the 1st June I warned the nearest captain. On the 2nd I found that the Kaffirs had made no preparation to depart, and said they would not go. On this the interpreter, Karkotie, secretly warned me to be well on my guard, as he had heard the Kaffirs encouraging each other to push in boldly among us and pretend to ask for tobacco. On the 6th we went to them for the third time, and they were again ready to push in among us with their weapons. I clearly saw that if I allowed the Kaffirs to make the first attack many must fall on our side. I hastily collected all the tobacco the men had with them, and having cut it into small bits, I went about twelve paces in front and threw it to the Kaffirs, calling them to pick it up; they ran out from amongst us and forgot their plan. I then gave

Art. 14. These taken prisoners, whether fighting men or not, and children to be divided among the members of the commando, to serve for subsistence for a term of years, according to age. If the members do not want them, then divide them among the poorest inhabitants, or send them to the landdrost.

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the word to fire, when the said three captains and all their men were overthrown and slain, and part of their cattle to the number of 800 taken." With this famous tobacco expedient—long remembered by all—began the first Kaffir War. Atrocious as the deed may seem to have been, it is difficult to see how, under the circumstances, the obvious trickery of the natives could have been met except by trickery. The advantage gained by this decisive first blow was followed up with the greatest activity by the commando. Driven quickly from place to place, with continued loss of life and cattle, the whole of the enemy fled over the stated boundary. At Naude's Hoek 260 were killed and 2,200 head of cattle taken, and shortly after over 3,000 more were captured. On July the 19th the commando was disbanded, having been in the field scarcely two months and having accomplished all that was desired. This demonstration of ability to perform what was threatened had a salutary effect, for it was not until some years afterwards, when presumably they had calculated their chances of better success, that the Kaffirs ventured again to molest the white inhabitants.

Graaff Reinets seems to have been destined to fight its way into existence through continuous trouble and constant struggle. No sooner was Kaffir strife in the south at an end than the Bushmen in the north demanded attention, and thus, having to spend so much of their time on these harassing and dangerous expeditions and so little on their own private affairs, the wretched farmers were kept in a state of almost hopeless poverty. Their homes were pictures of want and discomfort. Their houses were no more than four low mud walls, with a couple of square holes to admit light and a door of rough wicker-work, under a thatch of rushes slovenly spread on a few crooked poles for support. In the country near the Sneeuwbergen, cattle were continually being driven off and Dutch and Hottentots murdered by Bushmen. Petitions for assistance were met by orders to make frequent and extended patrols to destroy the hated race. In 1787—the year after the foundation of Graaff Reinets—it became necessary to order out a commando of all available burghers into these parts, the Government providing the necessary ammunition. Added to the disorder thus created by native troubles, there was yet another cause which contributed to the Graaff Reinets difficulties. The scattered popula-

tion was of a very heterogeneous nature. There were those who found themselves settled in those parts in consequence of the gradual eastward migration, which resulted from the desire of their forebears to escape from the unjust and irritating rule of the Netherlands East India Company—and who may be regarded as the *bona-fide* farmers of the district. There was also a large proportion of more recent comers, emigrant Europeans of various nationalities, who, finding themselves unable to earn a living in the west, made this remote region their rendezvous. Lichtenstein says, "If a soldier who had served out his time, or a European who had not talent sufficient to get his bread in Cape Town, wished to establish himself as a Colonist, this was the part to which all such were sent". The disaffection which the Dutch farmers had ever cherished against the Company's rule became amalgamated with revolutionary sentiments introduced by immigrants from France and Holland. When to this is added the total want of education—for the foreigners were from the lowest ranks of society in their own countries—it is not surprising that the population was factious and turbulent. Unrestrained by conscience or by law every one obeyed only the dictates of his own desires. To control such a community effectively and to inaugurate a better order of things, it was imperative not only to establish a seat of magistracy, but to exercise the greatest wisdom and discretion in the choice of the officials who should be appointed to guide the destinies of this chaotic district. Unfortunately for the peace and well-being of early Graaff Reinet, those who were selected to assume authority over the district were men who regarded their appointments as a species of exile, which was to be temporarily endured in the prospect of better advancement in the future. The attitude adopted by these officials was one of complete lack of sympathy and interest in the affairs of the struggling inhabitants. The first landdrost was an elderly man, a Mr. Woeke, who could scarcely have been expected to possess that energy which the circumstances demanded. He was of an indolent disposition and inclined to allow difficulties to settle themselves, and, further to add to his inefficiency, he eventually became addicted to drink. As secretary of the district to Mr. Woeke, Jan Jacob Wagener was appointed. After holding office but a short time, he resigned, and Honoratius

CHAP. Christiaan Maynier took his place. This man, who afterwards  
II. became landdrost in place of Mr. Woeke, was intensely unpopular, and by the imprudent policy he pursued brought about the most disastrous results, leading eventually to open rebellion against the Government. The new district could be but of little value to the Company; it was therefore to be maintained at as little cost as possible. With a view of making it self-supporting, a tax of 1s. 4d. on every 100 sheep and 1d. on every head of cattle was levied. The greatest expense anticipated and feared was that arising from the protection of the country against native inroads. To this end Mr. Woeke was instructed to use every means of avoiding conflict with the Kaffirs, to endeavour to conciliate them and to maintain friendship by giving them presents. The strictest orders were issued forbidding the farmers to barter for cattle or have any other dealings with them. With the feeble organisation and no power at hand for enforcing the penalties, forbidden traffic continued, and many Kaffirs were in the service of the farmers as herds. This latter proceeding was felt to be especially dangerous, for a rupture at any time between master and such a servant might lead to trouble with the tribe to which the native belonged. For a time a period of prosperity seemed to dawn, and with it the hope of repairing damaged fortunes. Comparative peace and quietness enabled the impoverished farmers to resume their pursuit of cattle breeding and the production of such commodities as butter and soap. These every now and then were transported to Cape Town, where they found a ready market. All this, however, was merely the calm which betokened an impending storm. With terrible suddenness a number of chiefs, among whom were Langa and Cungwa, the son of Tshaka, probably resenting the treatment they had received from Van Jaarsveld, crossed the Fish River early in 1789 with hundreds of their adherents, and, scarcely before the farmers had time to escape with their families, were in complete possession of the Zuurveld. Farming operations were at an end. Mr. Woeke, the landdrost, took immediate action. Calling out the male inhabitants again on commando, he placed them under the leadership of one D. W. Kuhne. Thirsting for revenge the farmers sought out and followed up the enemy, who, having possessed themselves of nearly all the cattle in the

district, retreated to the Fish River. The river which was in flood prevented them from crossing, and thus the commando was able to come up with them. A fight was imminent, but before it could take place, instructions from Cape Town overtook the commando, forbidding any collision and ordering them to disband. After all the trouble and fatigue inseparable from such an expedition, they were not allowed to fire a single shot, but had to witness their cattle being driven off and themselves prevented from attempting to retake them. The message from Cape Town was in answer to a letter appealing for assistance, which Mr. Woeke had despatched immediately on hearing of the attack. Instead of the desired assistance, the landdrost received a reprimand for having authorised the commando to go forth and also the strictest orders to prevent any further hostile action. On the contrary, he was to endeavour to cajole and coax the Kaffirs to return to their own country by means of presents, and for that purpose goods and merchandise were sent to Graaff Reinets in charge of Mr. Maynier. This gentleman had been appointed secretary of the district in place of Mr. Wagener, who shortly before these occurrences had resigned. The three men, Woeke, Wagener and Maynier, were constituted a commission to deal with the whole circumstance and to restore tranquillity at as little expense as possible. Accompanied by a number of armed burghers they set out from Graaff Reinets for the Zuurveld, and thence endeavoured to get into communication with some of the belligerent chiefs, but having arrived at the Kowie River, their further progress was impeded by that river being in flood. They sent forward some Hottentots with an invitation to Tshaka and Cungwa to come to a conference. These chiefs, however, excused themselves on the ground of ill-health, though some chiefs of minor importance ventured to come to "hear the word" of the white man. From these it appeared that the Kaffirs did not consider that their late inroad was an invasion into territory which was not their own, as the country was theirs in virtue of the purchase from Ruiter. They refused to listen to any arguments based upon treaties, except in so far that they were willing to pay to Government in cattle the same rent for the use of the country between the Fish and Kowie Rivers as the farmers were paying; beyond that they refused to enter into any negotiations whatever. The Commis-

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sioners offered presents which were accepted, but this in no measure altered the situation, or induced the Kaffirs to retire. Shortly afterwards, however, they did retire, and with almost unseemly haste. A rumour was spread among them that Van Jaarsveld had been called upon to settle matters, and that he was organising a commando for that purpose. That being the case, it was no time to consider questions regarding their right to the Zuurveld. The recollection of the tobacco incident of 1781 and all that followed it being still fresh in their memories, they manifested a very sincere desire to leave the Colony, and fled precipitately to the fastnesses of the distant Amatola Mountains. There they took refuge until it became evident that there was nothing worse to fear than conflict with the Cape Town Government. On July 18th following, Cungwa, with a large body of followers, was again near the Colony and was met at a ford of the Fish River by Mr. Wagener. Messrs. Woeke and Maynier had previously returned to their duties at Graaff Reinet, and had left the ex-secretary to make what final settlement he could. Further futile attempts were made to induce the invaders to remain on the east of the Fish River, and powerless to do anything else, Mr. Wagener made a virtue of necessity by giving them permission to occupy the desired country at the pleasure of Government. And thus, having driven many of the inhabitants from their homes and seized the greater number of the cattle of the district, far from any punishment being inflicted, the marauders were permitted to keep the ill-gotten spoil and to retain possession of the Zuurveld. This was regarded in official quarters as a satisfactory restoration of peace, but by the inhabitants it was felt that those who ought to have protected them had not only abandoned them to the mercy of savages, but had perpetrated the further cruelty of depriving them of the right to protect themselves. Apart from the unhappy state of the district arising from the attitude of the natives, there was discord at the drostdy.<sup>1</sup> The new secretary, Mr. Maynier, did not work in harmony with his superior. Each disliked the other and both were hated by those in whose interests they were appointed to act. Mr. Maynier was rising in favour and influence with the authorities at Cape Town, and

<sup>1</sup> That is, the landdrost's headquarters.

was therefore at no pains to hide his feelings towards his superior, who was not so fortunate. CHAP.  
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In 1792 the Bushmen inhabiting the mountainous regions in the north-western parts of the Colony having increased in daring, nearly a hundred farms had to be abandoned in consequence of their murderous onslaughts. In order to determine what was to be done, the landdrosts of Stellenbosch, Swellendam and Graaff Reinet were summoned to Cape Town to confer with Colonel Gordon, the officer who accompanied Governor Van Plettenberg in his journey of 1778. Mr. Woeke failed to appear at the meeting and was therefore suspended from his office. He eventually showed that it was impossible to have travelled the long distance in the short time between the issue of the summons and the time of the meeting. As there were other reasons for dissatisfaction with his conduct, the suspension was changed to final dismissal, and Mr. Maynier was appointed in his place. As far as the inhabitants were concerned it was exchanging King Log for King Stork. With the appointment of the new landdrost began the stormiest days of Graaff Reinet. The seed of discontent and want of confidence in the Government had already taken root, and at this period the plant had reached such a stage in its growth that wise and sympathetic treatment would have caused it to shrivel up and die, while the reverse nourished and increased it, until the time came when the tree defied all the storm which threatened it, and stood forth in its own strength and independence.

With the accession of Mr. Maynier to office, there came into existence an extraordinary attitude of mind towards the inhabitants of the Eastern Province which seemed to possess all those who for many years subsequently were concerned in guarding its destiny. Without proper inquiry into the causes of the many conflicts with the natives, there was a general disposition to view the white inhabitants as the aggressors and to consider all their vicissitudes and sufferings as the legitimate result of unoffending natives goaded to violence by ill-usage. The belief was professed that cattle were stolen by the Kaffirs from the farmers only because the latter had previously despoiled the former, and that peace was to be obtained by a discontinuance of such procedure. It was undoubtedly convenient for those responsible for the welfare of the country to



CHAP. II. adopt such a view, considering the difficulty and expense of establishing a wise and adequate protection for so large and apparently valueless territory. Mr. Maynier stubbornly maintained such views, in spite of what he must have witnessed around him, and thus remained in favour with his official superiors. The arrangement of 1789, whereby the Kaffirs occupied the Zuurveld with nominal permission, but in reality because the Government were powerless to prevent them from doing so, could not but lead to further trouble. They were too near neighbours of the white population for any peaceable understanding to be long maintained. Their numerous herds wandered into and grazed upon the territories of the farmers, who, too weak to act in their own defence, moved to more distant parts, sometimes, it may be, returning to revenge and remunerate themselves by secretly driving away any stray Kaffir cattle. This led to reprisals on the part of the natives, and thus before long the whole district was involved in general turmoil. Besides all this, the customary feuds between the Kaffirs themselves aggravated the disorder. The tribes on the immediate east of the Fish River were dominated by the powerful and turbulent chief Ndhlabi, who at the time referred to was living in the present district of Peddie. These tribes were at enmity with those in the Zuurveld, on the immediate west of the Fish River, whose most important chief, Langa, then an old man, had been taken prisoner by Ndhlabi. Everything was ripe for war between these clans. At this juncture, the farmers finding themselves continually and increasingly robbed, and realising the uselessness of appealing to Mr. Maynier or the Government for redress, actually determined to try the expedient of seeking assistance from Ndhlabi. That chief with many of his followers willingly joined a commando, which was without the permission or official cognisance of the landdrost. Surrounding and attacking a kraal, they captured 800 head of cattle which were divided between Ndhlabi and the farmers who had lost. The Zuurveld Kaffirs, finding themselves unable to cope with these combined forces and also having allies in more distant Kaffirland, appealed to these to come to their assistance. The appeal was not in vain. Always ready for war, the desired reinforcements crossed the Fish River in great numbers. But, strange to say, a reconcilia-

tion seemed to have taken place between the tribes, which, up to that time, had been at variance, and the whole race combined against the colonists. In one overwhelming wave these hordes swept across the country, almost completely depopulating it of white inhabitants. Of the 120 farms there were between the Kowie and Zwartkops Rivers, 116 were abandoned. Some of the farmers who fell into the hands of the enemy were tortured to death; 65,327 cattle, 11,000 sheep and 200 horses were carried off by the invaders. The condition of the country assumed so grave an aspect that Mr. Maynier considered some decisive action on his part was called for. Still convinced of the nobility and simplicity of the native character, he went forth accompanied by some of his haemraaden, to distribute presents to the chiefs and to obtain the oft-repeated promise to observe the Fish River as the boundary. His negotiation, in the early stage, seemed to be attended with success, as the natives were crossing into their own country in large numbers. This, however, was only in order to place the stolen cattle in places of safety. His demand that the cattle should be restored to the owners was met with a decided refusal. Unable to do anything further he returned to Graaff Reinet. He had scarcely arrived, when he learned that, in spite of his persuasive influence, those natives who had left the Colony had returned, bringing with them others, and that the outbreak had assumed a still greater magnitude.

When intelligence of the invasion reached Swellendam, a small armed band consisting of twenty-six farmers and fourteen Hottentots went forth to render what assistance was possible, but finding themselves opposed by some 6,000 Kaffirs, they prudently retired. Shortly after, instructions were received by Mr. Faure, the landdrost of Swellendam, to assemble a strong commando from that district and to act in concert with the available men from Graaff Reinet. About 400 of the white inhabitants took the field. In the meantime, Mr. Maynier had endeavoured to get a force together, but so great was the want of confidence in him, that it was with much difficulty he collected 117 willing to serve under him. "It would naturally be supposed that previous to the commencement of hostilities, the whole force would have been collected and some plan of operations arranged between the persons entrusted with the

CHAP. II. conduct of this campaign. It must therefore appear very extraordinary, that before the arrival of the farmers from Swellendam, those under the command of Mr. Maynier, the landdrost of Graaff Reinet, had commenced hostilities."<sup>1</sup>

The commandos from the two districts eventually met on the abandoned farm of Cornelius van Rooyen, near the present city of Grahamstown. Maynier took the command, but not without protest on the part of a large number of the Graaff Reinet people, who subsequently joined. It was represented that there was a general desire to have Laurens de Jager of Swellendam as commandant-general. Mr. Maynier, however, refused to give way and maintained his position.

Much time elapsed before any move could be made against the enemy. This was probably due to the long distances which had to be traversed through difficult and sparsely populated country in getting the people together. The outbreak took place about the middle of June, 1793. It was not until September 8th that the Swellendam commando commenced its eastward march. Mr. Maynier began to collect his unwilling force on August 19th, two months after the damage had been done. So that, while these tardy preparations were in progress, the Kaffirs had ample time to go backwards and forwards into Kaffirland with spoil.

The force was divided into two divisions. One, under Maynier, marched into Kaffirland, crossing the Fish River probably at or near the present Fort Brown Drift. The other division remained in the Zuurveld, encamped on the farm of Lucas Meyer, the site of the present Church Square of the city of Grahamstown. The former division came in contact with some of the enemy at the junction of the Koonap River with the Fish River. Two skirmishes ensued when 1,500 head of cattle were captured and a few Kaffirs killed. Shortly afterwards at a drift lower down the Fish River, called Trompetter's Drift, 2,500 more cattle were obtained. At this place they were joined by a petty Gonaqua chief with some of his people. They professed to be friendly and offered their services in assisting to recover further cattle, an offer which Maynier accepted. It was noticed that these people lighted large fires at night-time

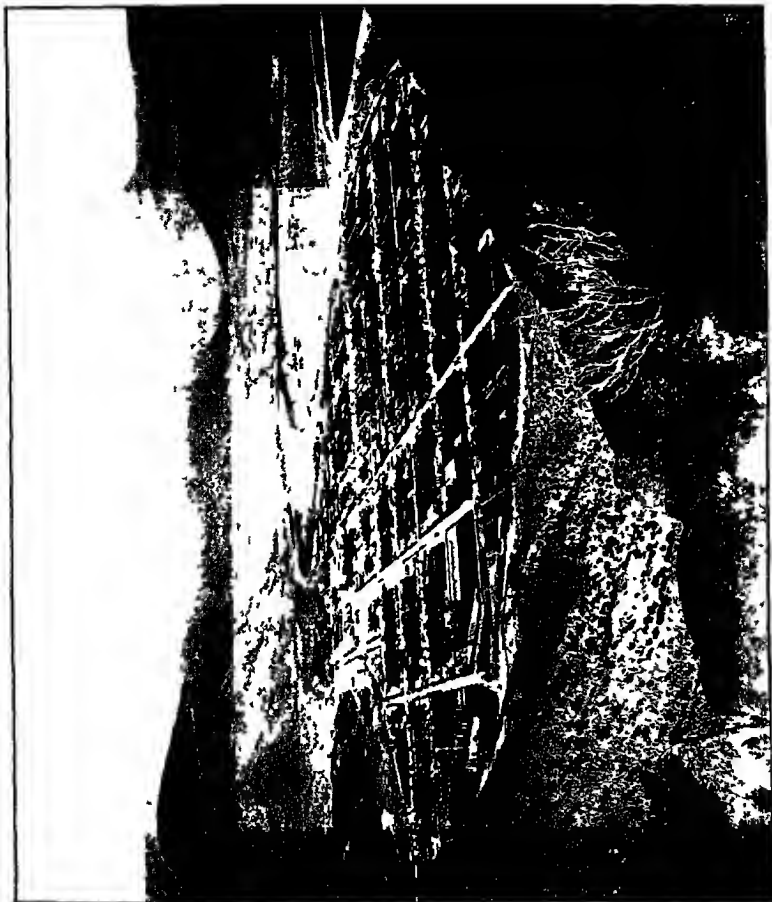
<sup>1</sup> Collins' Report, 1809.

and that no further cattle were captured. Mr. Maynier refused to share the suspicion which was entertained by those under his command, that these people were acting in concert with the enemy and indicating the whereabouts of their pursuers by this procedure. The division then proceeding farther to the east, crossed the Keiskamma at the mouth and went as far as the Buffalo, killing 40 Kaffirs and capturing 7,000 head of cattle. Returning with this spoil, the greater part of which was lost in consequence of the drought then prevailing, the chief Ndhambi was visited and presents given to him. He made a show of friendship and expressed himself anxious to collect and restore the stolen cattle, albeit many with colonial brands were seen in his immediate vicinity. While this force was in Kaffirland, the hostile tribes, which had fled from the Colony, had eluded the commando and recrossed the Fish River at a ford near the sea, probably the present Kaffir Drift, and resumed occupation of their former haunts. Mr. Maynier's division returned to the camp in the Zuurveld and then began some feeble and ineffectual attempts to dislodge and drive forth the enemy again. At length, both men and horses being worn out with fatigue and discouragement, the landdrost considered that no further step could be taken but to seek peace on the best terms that could be obtained. For this purpose an interview was arranged with some chiefs of importance, when the landdrosts esteemed themselves fortunate in obtaining a peace, on terms, as they themselves stated, disadvantageous to the Colony. In reply to the demand for the restoration of cattle, it was stated that this was impossible, as what were not in possession of Ndhambi had either been slaughtered for food or had perished from the drought. No mention was made of any retreat into Kaffirland, but with the mere promise to remain at peace and abstain from plundering the farmers, these negotiations, as well as the inglorious campaign, ended. Dissatisfied as the ruined farmers had been all through this conflict, they were still more so at its termination. They not only beheld the Kaffirs enjoying the same possession of the Zuurveld as before the tedious attempt to dislodge them, but what was of still more concern, in the absence of any agreement about retiring to Kaffirland, they had to regard the Kaffir's right to the occupation of the Zuurveld as practically

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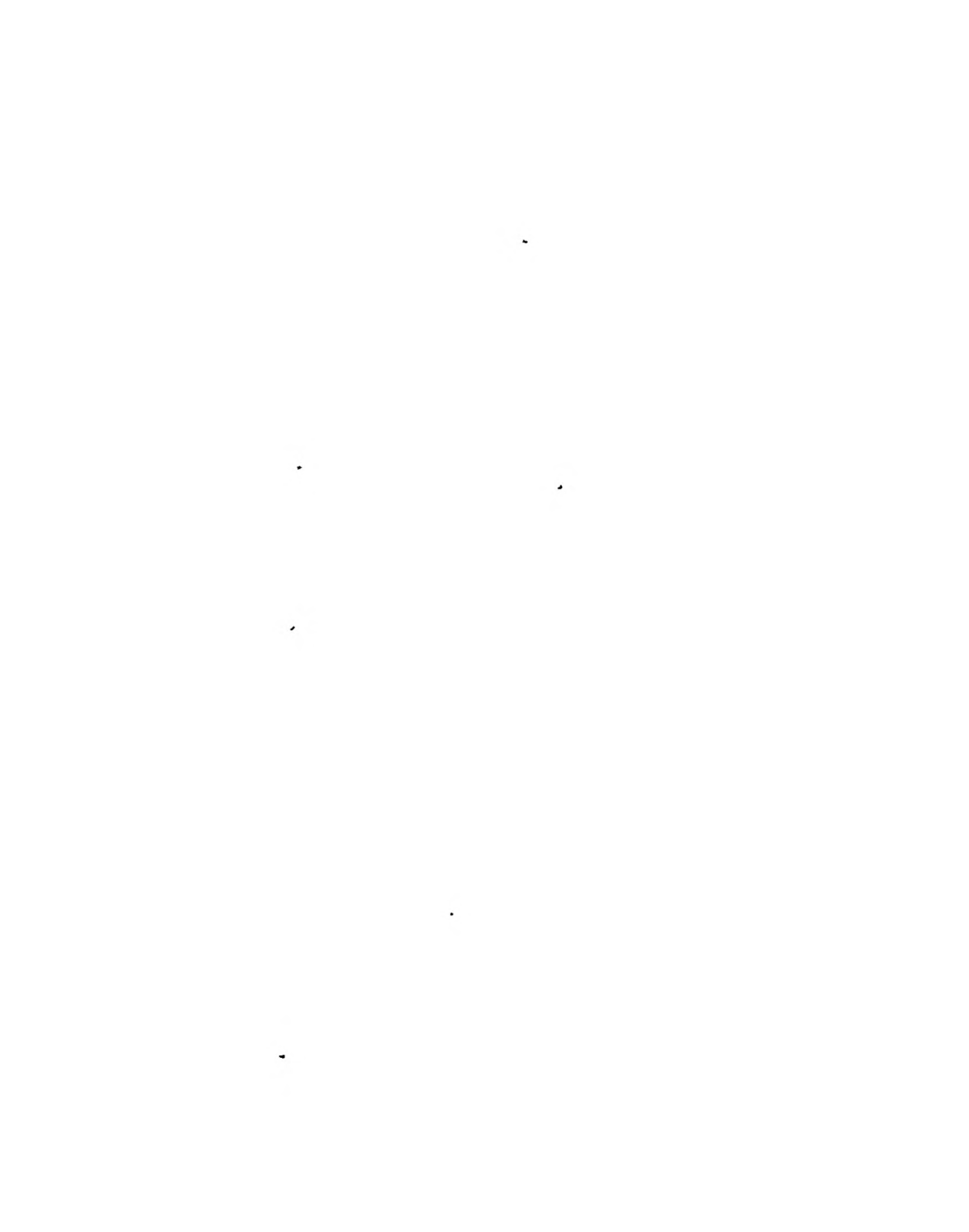
acknowledged and established. Far from being awed by the authority and force with which they had had to contend, and far from fearing further consequences, they committed fresh murders and robberies almost before the members of the commando had reached their homes. A burgher named Erasmus was murdered near the Zwartkops River and all his cattle taken. Two others were murdered and one badly wounded. With loss of the greater part of their live stock, with increased insecurity of tenure of life and property in consequence of the virtual admission of the Kaffirs to the Zuurveld, the unfortunate white inhabitants wanted but little more to fill their cup of unhappiness to the brim. This was at hand, and took the form of a report concerning the cause of the outbreak which was drawn up and presented to the Government in 1794 by Mr. Maynier. In it every attempt was made to represent the natives as a quiet and peaceably disposed people who had been driven to the violence they had committed by ill-usage on the part of the burghers. Every hostile act of the latter was given an undue prominence while the maraudings of the Kaffirs were either ignored or excused. The losses of the inhabitants were stated to have been fully compensated by the late reprisals. All this was what the Government authorities of the West, who perhaps realised their weakness, were most willing to hear and believe; and thus, with all qualms of conscience quietened, or perhaps stifled by this comforting report, they relieved themselves of any further responsibility, for a time at least, in these Eastern Province troubles. The farmers had disbanded from the commando almost in a state of rebellion; and finding, as they conceived, their interests neglected and their acts and conditions of life misrepresented, a state of violent fermentation against the Government ensued. Colonel Collins says: "Indeed from this moment the authority of Government began to decline in the eastern districts, the inhabitants conceiving that, as it had not the power to protect, it was unable to punish. Some evil-disposed persons at the Cape, as well as in the country, took advantage of these circumstances to propagate revolutionary principles, and Graaff Reinet became the theatre of anarchy and revolt."

The district of Graaff Reinet, though having causes of vexation and discontent peculiar to itself, was not exempt from



*Photo W. K. J. sq. Gradiat Kemal*

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grievances of which the rest of the Colony complained. In consequence of the short-sighted policy of the Government, whereby foreign ships were unwillingly afforded supplies, and then only at high prices, the market for available produce was very limited. The general result of this was the depression of trade and the poverty of the community. The farmers were in arrears with the payment to the Company of their stock taxes, quit-rent, and other dues. Following the tradition of the earlier years of the Dutch East India Company, the Government continued to raise revenue by farming out to the highest bidder the exclusive right to trade in particular commodities such as meat, bread and wine. Curses to a country as monopolies must always be, they were particularly so to the Cape Colony at the time referred to, and probably more than anything else they tended to bring about the downfall of the Company's rule and the country's passing into the hands of the British. The sole right to supply meat to the Company as well as to private individuals, was a source of great irritation, acting, as it did, as a kind of tax-gatherer. The monopolist butcher sent his servant into the interior parts of the country to purchase cattle from the farmers. The servant paid for the cattle by bills on his master. When a want of household necessities and other business compelled the farmer to go to Cape Town, in many cases a journey perhaps of two months, the bills were presented for payment. The master butcher, acting on behalf of the Company, would then deduct what was owing, which probably may have been the whole amount, and thus the poor farmer would have to return to his far home without money or the necessities he had hoped to obtain. In and near Cape Town the monopolist could protect his privilege more efficiently than in the distant districts, and usually did so to such an extent that people in the capital dared not kill the mutton belonging to their estates without the consent of the Company's butcher,<sup>1</sup> and to obtain that some consideration was absolutely necessary.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* remarks on state of Colony by Donald Campbell, *Records*, vol. i., p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> The inhabitants of Graaff Reinet being entirely stock farmers and not agriculturists, did not feel the burden of the wheat duties so heavily as did those in the West. Mr. F. Korstens in his memorandum of the Colony, *vide Records*,



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Another cause of general dissatisfaction which prevailed throughout the country at this time was the substitution of paper money for coin. This had been brought about by the low financial state which existed in Holland owing to the war. The available specie had been borrowed from the inhabitants of the Colony at a very low rate of interest and on promise of repayment as soon as the straitened circumstances of the mother country would permit. To provide for a currency at the Cape, Governor Van Plettenberg in May, 1782, authorised an issue of 49,696 rix-dollars (about £9,539) in paper or cardboard notes, upon no other security than the good faith of the Government. Each rix-dollar thus created was estimated at 8 skillings or 48 stivers, equivalent to rather more than 4 shillings sterling. The original issue was subsequently increased to 925,219 rix-dollars (about £185,043), which sum, however, was shortly afterwards reduced by specie and bills from Holland to the extent of 825,904 rix-dollars (about £165,181), so that by 1789 the amount still existing in paper currency was 99,315 rix-dollars (about £19,863). This partial repayment affixed credit to the remaining sum and thus facilitated the further issues at later dates. The cartoon money was a great inconvenience. It did not stand wear and tear; the lower values especially very soon became defaced and damaged and were only accepted in business transactions with caution and suspicion. Worn-out notes were continually called in by Government and replaced by new, but in the distant districts the extremes of dilapidation took place before it was possible to exchange them for new.

This creation of paper money is inseparably connected with another creation, that of the Lombard Loan Bank. The general stagnation of trade, which ensued upon the embarrassments of the mother country as well as upon the maladminis-

vol. i., p. 172, says: "Every wheat farmer is obliged to pay tithes to the Company, and to see them taken to the Company's storehouse at his own expense. He is not allowed to sell his wheat to any but the Company and Burgher storehouse for 25 Rix dollars the 10 muids or sacks; the Burgher Commissioners sell it to the bakers at 30 Rix dollars. No man is allowed to bring bread or flour to town with him; supposing therefore an inhabitant of the town to have a farm in the country, he cannot even in that case use his own flour or bread; he is bound to sell his corn to the monopolist, and the price he gets for it would not suffice to repurchase half of it in bread."

tration at the Cape, had produced a state of general distress. The want of money, both specie and paper, had become so pressing that even those in possession of fixed property were unable to pay their debts or to obtain money on loan or sale of such property. To relieve this condition of things, a loan bank was established in 1793 by the Commissioners Nederburgh and Frykenius, who in the previous year had arrived in the Colony to inquire into and report upon the many complaints against the Government which had been sent to Holland. The administration of the bank was vested in a board consisting of a president and two members. They were authorised to lend money on both movable and immovable property for a period of two years, though this might be extended at their discretion. The rate of interest was 5 per cent., 4 per cent. to go to the general revenue of the country and 1 per cent. for the maintenance of the bank. To raise the capital to effect the purpose of this bank, it became necessary to create a further quantity of inconvertible paper money; and a sum of 680,000 Rds. (about £136,000) came into existence. Further issues were made from time to time, so that when the Cape was surrendered to the British two years later, the total amount of paper money in existence was 1,291,276 Rds. (about £258,255). "A bank which had for its object relief of distressed industry and the promotion of trade was no doubt an establishment worthy of a considerate Government, but this institution which professed the attainment of such objects had by the mode of administering its affairs tended rather to the prejudice than to the relief of the industrious part of the community.

"That clause which empowered the committee to continue the loan beyond the period of two years and which was intended to be used solely upon particular occasions became general in its application, the repayment was never made, not even demanded, and consequently each loan diminished the capital without a reflux of its former issues to answer subsequent applications, as the interest was employed to the immediate use of Government and formed part of the current revenues of the year; nor was this the only abuse. It has likewise been found that it was not the necessitous alone who sought for and obtained the advantages of a loan, that many who could succeed in borrowing from the bank a sum at 5 per cent. lent it at

CHAP. II. increased interest to the more needy, whose want of collateral security or of interest with the commissioners perhaps prevented their receiving relief from the regular channel, and thus an establishment instituted partly for the suppression of usury afforded the means to many individuals of conducting a usurious traffic, with the additional advantage of obtaining at all events 1 per cent. if lent as legal interest, without being subject to the cognisance of the law."<sup>1</sup>

Great things had been expected from the visit of the two commissioners sent from Holland. The people had never wavered in their loyalty to the mother country, but had felt that all their vicissitudes had arisen from neglect of their interests by the servants of the Company stationed at the Cape. The most sanguine anticipations were entertained of the dawn of more fortunate times, when the many abuses and malversations should have become known to the representatives of the Home Government and remedied. These hopes, however, were doomed to disappointment, for after a stay of a little over a year, the commissioners left the country, having accomplished but little in the way of redress. This, aggravating the general discontent, very shortly led to open rebellion against the Company's rule.

Besides the distress arising indirectly from monopolies, taxes, paper money and general stagnation of trade, Graaff Reinet was still harassed by Bushmen in the north and Kaffirs in the south and east. Mr. Maynier disregarded all the representations and appeals for assistance by the white inhabitants and continued to send reports of peace and plenty to Cape Town. Realising the uselessness of any further intercourse with their landdrost, the inhabitants sent a deputation to Mr. Sluysken, who was then acting as governor of the Colony. It was hoped thereby to demonstrate the falsity of Mr. Maynier's reports and to procure his dismissal. The experiment was a failure. Mr. Sluysken refused to hold any investigation or afford any satisfaction whatever. With disappointment and anger, the deputation returned to Graaff Reinet. After having tried, without success, every constitutional method of obtaining

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Earl of Caledon to Viscount Castlereagh, *Records*, vol. vii., p. 180.

redress of their wrongs, one last resource seemed open to them, and that was to take matters into their own hands. CHAP.  
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There were not wanting restless spirits who, taking advantage of the temper of the people, fomented the rising antagonism to the Government. The knowledge of what had been taking place in Europe and America had become diffused throughout the Colony. The success which had attended the revolts in those countries against their respective Governments encouraged the inhabitants of Graaff Reinet to hazard the same measures. Accordingly, on February 4th, 1795, forty farmers under the leadership of Adriaan van Jaarsveld and Jan Carel Triegardt assembled before the dwelling of Mr. Maynier and demanded an interview with him. Plain speaking ensued on both sides, and though the landdrost remonstrated with them, he was requested to leave the district, and did so, returning to Cape Town. There were also expelled with him the burgher war officer, Cornelius Coetsee, and two haemraaden, "on account of their sacrificing, contrary to their Oath and Duty, the general Welfare to the vain Friendship of the Landdrost, by agreeing always with the same, so that in this case neither Burghers nor servants of the Company have been spared".<sup>1</sup>

The arrival of the expelled landdrost in Cape Town must have very clearly indicated the magnitude of the trouble with which the Government found itself face to face. Mr. Sluysken was in a difficult position. The military establishment was not large, consisting of fifty-two officers and about 1,700 rank and file. In February previously, informal information concerning the unsettled state of Holland had reached the Cape, creating a condition of uncertainty and suspense, which was accentuated by the non-arrival of further news. Under these circumstances, it was considered prudent to keep all the available force at hand in case of attack which it was thought might probably be made by England or France. To have detached any number of men for so long a time as would have been necessary to journey to distant Graaff Reinet and back could not but have increased the military weakness already existing. Mr. Sluysken therefore could do little else than substitute persuasion for force; accordingly he despatched to the disturbed district a

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Burghers of Graaff Reinet to General Craig, *Records*, vol. i., p. 209.

CHAP. II. commission, consisting of the president of the High Court of Justice, Mr. Olof Godlieb de Wet, his secretary, Mr. Jan Andries Truter, and Captain Von Hugel, of the Wurtemberg Regiment. This commission was to endeavour to pacify the exasperated burghers and to restore peace as best they could, in fact, to adopt much the same policy as had been usual with the Kaffirs, but with the exception that the question of giving presents seems to have been overlooked. The visit extended over about six weeks. It was agreed to relieve the district of the presence of Mr. Maynier. But that which the burghers were most anxious to effect was refused, namely, that the commissioners would themselves make a tour into the devastated Zuurveld and thus be enabled to compare the actual state of things with the statements in Mr. Maynier's reports. Distrusting therefore the sincerity of those officials, one last request remained to be made. This was conveyed by an armed party, and was that the commissioners would leave the district with the least possible delay. Having thus thrown off the yoke of the Dutch East India Company, though still acknowledging allegiance to Holland, Graaff Reinet set about establishing an independent government of its own. Carel David Gerotz was appointed by the people as landdrost, and Adriaan van Jaarsveld was given charge of all military affairs. A commencement was made by these "Nationalists," as they called themselves, to reorganise the district in accordance with their own views. Certain obnoxious taxes were abolished and other measures were in contemplation, when all their plans were seriously interrupted by the arrival of the British in the latter part of this year (1795) to take the Cape entirely out of the hands of the Dutch. The population of the district of Graaff Reinet, as furnished by the census of 1795, was 808 men, 596 women, 910 boys, 761 girls, 4 servants, 369 slave men, 210 slave women. Of live stock there were 1,278 horses, 26,273 cattle, 22,248 sheep. The price of a bullock, according to Barrow, was about forty-eight shillings, and of a sheep from six to eight shillings.<sup>1</sup>

The success which had attended the proceedings of the "Nationals" in Graaff Reinet, increased the spirit of opposition to the Company's rule throughout the Colony. Swellen-

<sup>1</sup>*Vide Records*, vol. i., p. 279.

dam determined to bid for an independent government ; though there had not been the same reasons for discontent in that district as had been the case at Graaff Reinet. The landdrost, Mr. Faure, seems to have given general satisfaction, but the fact that he was a loyal servant of the Company was considered sufficient to warrant expulsion of himself and those of his subordinates who refused to adopt "National" principles.

While all this turmoil and anarchy were distracting the country from within, a fleet of armed English vessels was on the ocean, steering for the Cape. Holland was at war with France. England, who was in alliance with the former, feared that one result of the conflict might be the capture of the Cape by the French, and the detriment to the Indian trade which would probably follow if what had been a feather in the hands of the Dutch became a sword in the hands of France. To safeguard the national interests against any such calamity, a large force was despatched with the least possible delay to seize the Cape and hold it as a British dependency. Nine vessels under command of Admiral Sir George Keith Elphinstone sailed up to the anchorage in Simon's Bay on June 11th, 1795, having on board troops under the command of Major-General James Henry Craig. These were afterwards reinforced on September 3rd by fourteen other ships with about 3,000 more troops under command of Major-General Alured Clarke.

In the first place, negotiations were opened by the English with a view of persuading the Cape authorities to surrender the Colony amicably. A letter was sent by Admiral Elphinstone and General Craig inviting and requiring the Government and inhabitants of the settlement of the Cape of Good Hope "to accept and put themselves under the protection of His said Majesty by delivering up the said settlement with its dependencies to the forces under our respective command in order to prevent its falling into the hands of the Enemy and to be held for the purpose aforesaid until a general pacification shall have composed the differences now subsisting in Europe". A letter had been brought from England from the Prince of Orange—who had fled to that country from Holland—authorising such procedure. Mr. Sluysken, while expressing his gratitude for such kind consideration, intimated that the military strength of the Colony was sufficient for its own protection, and that in

CHAP. II. the event of difficulty arising he would gladly avail himself of the proffered assistance. Suspicions of the real motives of the English being aroused, the supplies to the ships were suddenly stopped and a hostile attitude adopted. Alarms were given and the burghers far and near were called upon to assist the military in opposing the invasion. But the state of anarchy and internal distraction frustrated the attempt to produce that combination for common defence which might reasonably have been looked for in a better disposed community. The discontented felt that the evils which might conceivably arise in consequence of coming under a foreign yoke could not well exceed those which existed. Further, there was the visionary prospect, entertained by many, that, in the event of the overthrow of the existing Government, an independent one would be established. It is therefore not surprising that the call to arms was answered unwillingly, and that in one district, not only a direct refusal to go forward was given, but threats were made to pillage the properties of those who did.

In the Cape and Stellenbosch districts, the loyalty to Holland overcame the disinclination to assist in the support of the Company's rule, and very soon the burghers of these districts were at the scene of strife. But from the whole district of Swellendam only seventy men went forward in the first instance. The "Nationals" not only declined to obey but endeavoured to prevent others from responding to the call. Messages and appeals to their sense of duty were sent from the governor and Burgher Senate, assuring them of pardon and promise of reasonable redress of grievances if they would go forward. After some correspondence, in which the "Nationals" characteristically expressed their surprise that the "National Convention of the Colony of Swellendam" had not been recognised, the greater number took up arms against the English. Graaff Reinet, being so distant, could have taken no part in all this, but there can be little doubt but that a more determined refusal than that of Swellendam would have met any appeal to the burghers of that district. In fact, it was while the English troops were making preparations for the capture of Cape Town, that Graaff Reinet was expelling the commissioners and forming its own independent government.

Taken as a whole, the capture of the Cape was a somewhat one-sided struggle, in which superior numbers, discipline and unity of purpose were pitted against a heterogeneous force composed of military of doubtful loyalty and of civilians, who, though not wanting in bravery and accustomed, it may be, to the guerilla warfare with Bushmen, lacked the training of the regular soldier. Added to the weakness already existing in consequence of the country's being divided against itself by angry discontent, there was but a half-hearted disposition on the part of some of the highest officials to refuse admission to the English.

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On July 14th the first instalment of the invading force was landed at Simon's Town, and consisted of about 1,600 men. Hostilities began. Both sides fought with determination, the Dutch availed themselves of the high mountains which extend from Muizenberg to 'Simon's Town, while the English force on land, assisted by the guns on the ships, attacked the Dutch positions from False Bay on the east, and Chapman's, Camp's and Table Bays on the west of the peninsula. For some weeks it was by no means certain on which side the advantage lay, but on the arrival, on September 3rd, of General Clarke and fourteen ships having 3,000 troops on board, little doubt remained as to the result. The reinforcements with ammunition and supplies having been landed and conveyed to the camp at Muizenberg, a march was commenced on September 14th towards the capital. Some ineffectual attempts having been made to oppose this onward move, it became evident that further defence was useless. Mr. Sluysken opened communications with Generals Clarke and Craig with a view to surrendering the position. On the 16th the Articles of Capitulation<sup>1</sup> were signed, and the Cape became a British

<sup>1</sup> Two days after signing these articles, the generals in writing to the inhabitants of Swellendam said "that the first wish of the British Commanders is to adopt every measure which may appear proper to promote the prosperity of the Settlement and the happiness of the inhabitants.

"That the monopolies and oppressions hitherto practised for the benefit of the India Company are at an end. A free and internal trade and market takes place from this day, every man may buy of whom he pleases, sell to whom he pleases, employ whom he pleases, and come and go where and when he pleases by land or water. The inhabitants are invited to send their cattle, etc., to the Cape Town, where they may sell it in the manner which best suits them and is most for their interest.



CHAP. Dependency. Thus, after a period of 143 years, the rule of the  
II. Dutch East India Company came to an end.

“No new taxes shall be levied; such as now exist shall be considered as soon as possible, and those which we find to be burdensome on the people shall be abolished.

“The paper money is to retain its value, but the British make their payments in hard money.”

## CHAPTER III.

### THE INFLUENCE OF REVOLUTIONS IN EUROPE.

ONE of the chief springs of action which led the simple-minded Boers of Swellendam and Graaff Reinet to oppose their Government with such confidence had its source outside the Colony. The better, therefore, to understand this attitude with respect to their rulers, it is necessary to consider briefly the course of events which had been taking place in Europe for some years previously.

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For many years prior to 1789 there had been in France an increasing disposition on the part of the poorer classes to revolt against the ruling and social system which had brought about the misery and oppression they had long endured. This tendency had its birth in the influence which the philosophical and political writings of such men as Rousseau and Voltaire had exercised on the public mind. The masses had been set thinking on "the sovereignty of the people," "the equality of the rights of man," and on the injustice of the system of government under which they lived. The wretched circumstances and the disabilities of the lower classes—on whom fell the burden of paying the greater portion of the taxes—when compared with the hereditary privileges and immunities of the nobles and clergy, gradually shaped definite ideas of "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity". These views taking a practical form, eventually led to that great political upheaval known as the French Revolution.

France had, for many years, been in great and increasing financial embarrassment, so much so that by 1789 the country was on the verge of bankruptcy. To legalise the imposition of taxes which were proposed to be levied, representatives from all parts of France met the king and his court at Versailles in May of that year. In accordance with old custom, the representatives were divided into three classes or "Estates,"

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*viz* the Church, the Nobles, and the "Third Estate" or representatives of the people. From the commencement the meetings were stormy, and signs of the coming struggle were not wanting. The "Third Estate" was treated with the scantiest courtesy and consideration by Louis XVI and the court. Smarting under this treatment, and also the injustice of the system under which they lived, and conscious that they—the masses—were really the Nation, in the interests of which the king, court and all the paraphernalia of government existed, the representatives of the people formed themselves into a "National Assembly," and determined to institute an investigation into the causes of the national distress. The magnitude and influence of the National Assembly rapidly grew. The ranks were soon joined by many of the privileged classes, *viz*, the clergy and nobles, and thus, before long, the whole French nation became arrayed against the king and his court. In July, 1789, the first blood was shed, when the troops fired upon an unarmed mob in the streets of Paris. The anger of the populace, long repressed with difficulty, was instantly let loose, and all the fierce passions of civil war commenced their work of death and destruction. On the 14th of that month the Bastille was stormed and all its prisoners liberated. The flame of insurrection spread throughout France, in the distant parts the nobles were attacked by the peasants and compelled to seek refuge on the borders. The National Assembly carried out its policy of reconstruction unhindered. Nobility, privileged classes, and such institutions as offended against the principles of liberty and equality of the rights of man were abolished. In the first instance there was no intention of interfering with the monarchy, but as events shaped themselves, Louis XVI, having fallen under suspicion of being in league with foreign Powers to assist him against the Assembly, was tried by the newly constituted authority, and executed on January 21st, 1793.

The most important factor in determining the direction and extent of the Revolution was an organisation called the Jacobin Club. It commenced as a small coterie of individuals who met to discuss the measures of Government and the affairs of the State. But, after the turn which events had taken, and when political discussion had become more vehement and all-absorb-

ing, this club came to exercise a vast and increasing influence, until, for a time, it practically ruled France. The headquarters were at an old convent of the Dominican Friars or Jacobins, in the Rue St. Honoré in Paris. When at the zenith of its power it had hundreds of affiliated branches all through France, some of them with a membership of over a thousand, and employing armed bands of ruffians to enforce its dictates and plans. Thus the Jacobin Club in Paris became the great controlling power of the Revolution.

After the execution of the king and the overthrow of monarchy, matters went from bad to worse. The Jacobins, with Robespierre at their head, organised the terrible Committee of Public Safety. This enforced the "Law of the Suspected," whereby any one might be arrested on the slightest suspicion of want of sympathy with the revolutionary cause, and be executed at the guillotine or slain on the spot. In this manner many hundreds of citizens were murdered; and, when the process by the guillotine proved too slow, they were shot down by platoon fire. This period was known as the Reign of Terror, and reached its climax in the months of June and July of 1794. After that date reaction set in. Robespierre, losing his influence, fell into the hands of his enemies and was executed. The storm gradually subsided, until by January, 1795, both Jacobin Club and Revolution came to an end.

All this was not without its effect upon other European countries. In the early stages, the warmest sympathy for the oppressed multitudes was evinced in England, the fall of the Bastille being applauded almost as enthusiastically in London as in Paris. But the incendiarism, plunder and murders, which characterised the later development, soon alienated English hearts, and horror took the place of pity. The revolutionary ideas of the French essayists found a fruitful soil in Holland, for which country the eighteenth century had been a period of slow but sure decadence. A process of decentralisation of government had taken root and flourished, which, in proportion as it weakened the authority of the States-General and the Stadtholder, increased the power of the various provincial Governments. This resulted in the virtual dismemberment of the Republic, there being practically as many republics as there were provinces. This devolutionary tendency could not fail to

CHAP. III. affect the provincial Governments themselves, which, in course of time, saw the control of many matters of national interest pass into the hands of the municipal councils of the larger provincial towns. These councils (Vroed-Schappen) were not representative of the general body of citizens, but were recruited from a number of patrician families, and developed into oligarchies of the worst type. The "Regenten," as the families supreme in the councils were called, arrogated to themselves many rights and privileges, and created all kinds of sinecures which were bestowed on members of their families. Bent only upon preserving their power and subordinating public interests to their own, they resolutely opposed all democratic legislation, and by foul means or fair thwarted the actions of the States-General and the Stadtholder. Opposed to the "Regenten" and their policy of dismemberment was the party "de Prinsgezinden," which supported the authority of those properly constituted authorities. The failure of the last two stadtholders to effect necessary reforms alienated many of the "Prinsgezinden," and led to the rise of a third party, the "Democraten". These were in entire sympathy with the French Democrats and held the doctrines laid down in Rousseau's *Contrat Social*. Although diametrically opposed to each other in their aims and objects, "Democraten" and "Regenten" found a common ground of action in their intense hatred of the Stadtholder. They formed a temporary but unstable alliance, the united parties styling themselves "de Patrioten". The intervention of the King of Prussia, brother-in-law to the Stadtholder, William V., temporarily restored the latter's authority and caused thousands of the Patriot party to take refuge in France. When France, after the abolition of kingship, became involved in war with several European countries, a French army under Pichegru invaded Holland. The Stadtholder fled to England, and, amidst great rejoicings, the Batavian Republic was founded (1795). Three years later (1798) the first Republican Constitution was proclaimed, and in that year the Dutch East India Company was finally dissolved, the assets and liabilities which had not fallen upon the British being taken over by the new Government.

In South Africa the political condition of all except the privileged officials of the Company was comparable with those

of the lower classes in France and Holland. Knowledge of what was taking place in Europe made itself felt in the Colony, being disseminated by deserters from the Company's service, discharged soldiers and other adventurers who gradually mixed with the community. The temper of the people, already predisposed by their sentiments towards their rulers, rendered them easily susceptible to the impressions which such individuals were able to create. It is therefore a matter of little surprise that the greater part of the South African colonists were "patriots," or, as General Craig described them, infected with the rankest poison of Jacobinism. In the more isolated and distant parts, such as Graaff Reinet, public opinion, easily swayed by a few popular leaders, was at the mercy of those who introduced the new views, which, in conjunction with the ignorance and credulity of the farmers thus cut off from civilisation, gave birth to the most absurd ideas with respect to their own strength and importance.

In imitation of the French procedure, the handful of people in Graaff Reinet formed *their* "National Assembly," while in Swellendam the "National Convention of the Colony of Swellendam" came into existence. To make the copy more complete, expulsion of king or stadtholder found its counterpart in expulsion of the Government landdrosts and the substitution of their own. The "Nationals" further indicated their independence and patriotic sentiments by the wearing of the red, white and blue cockade.

This was the condition of things with which General Craig found himself confronted when he took over the government of the Cape. But, by his tactful and conciliatory measures and a display of genuine interest in their welfare, he soon gained the confidence of the greater part of the inhabitants, and brought order out of chaos; though it was felt that, had a French fleet appeared with the object of making the Cape a French Colony, the republican spirit would probably have induced all to assist that nation against the new holders.

Among the fears and uncertainties which had been associated in the public mind with a change of rulers, the fate of the large amount of unsecured paper money had been most prominent. It was felt that, should it not be recognised by the new authorities, absolute failure and ruin would be the inevit-

CHAP. III. able result. These fears, however, were allayed by the assurance not only that it should retain its value, but that the property of the Company was to be held as mortgage for it, and thus a specific security was given to the currency which it had never held before.<sup>1</sup>

The total amount in circulation at this period was 1,291,271 Rds. (about £258,256). Of this sum 677,366 Rds (about £135,474) was lent to individuals through the medium of the Lombard Bank on security upon estates and movables, leaving a sum of 613,910 Rds (about £122,783) to be secured by the lands and buildings of the Company.

The public satisfaction which attended General Craig's administration soon caused the revolutionary spirit in the district of the Cape and Stellenbosch to subside, and, further, it was not long before the same happy result extended to the district of Swellendam. General Craig sent a letter to the National Government of that district, explaining the intentions of the new Government and offering a pardon for all past offences to all who would quietly submit. The offer was accepted. The expelled landdrost, Mr. Faure, was sent back and took the place of the National landdrost, Mr. Hermanus Steyn, who loyally took office as haemraad under Mr. Faure. The various officials subscribed to the required oath to be true and faithful to his Majesty King George III., so long as his Majesty shall remain in possession of the Colony. Thus, so far as Swellendam is concerned, these political troubles ended. In this early stage there were reasons for thinking that the district of Graaff Reine

<sup>1</sup>The following is the answer to the 8th Article of the Capitulation: "I having been represented to us that the utmost confusion must ensue in the Colony and that it would in all probability be attended with the entire ruin of it, if the paper money now in circulation in it were deprived of that security which can alone give any effect to the 8th Article, we therefore consent that the Lands and Houses the property of the Dutch East India Company in this settlement shall continue the security of that part of the money which is not already secured by mortgages upon the Estates of Individuals by its having been lent to them. This is to be however without prejudice to the Government of Great Britain having the use of the Buildings, etc., for public purposes, and we will further represent to his Majesty's Government the infinite importance of this subject to the future prosperity of the Colony and request that they will take it into consideration in order to make such arrangements as may appear proper for its further security necessary or for its final liquidation if possible

"ALURED CLARKE,  
"G. K. ELPHINSTONE.

"Rustenburg, Sep. 16, 1795."

also would have taken part in the general submission. On October 29th, that is, about as soon as the news of the capitulation arrived at the village of Graaff Reinet, the burghers despatched a letter to General Craig. Though evidently written under the influence of their unhappy and distressed conditions, it was couched in respectful and submissive terms. The burghers hoped by this communication to disabuse the mind of General Craig of any misrepresentations of their character which they suspected might be made by the revengeful servants of the Company. They pointed out that, had it not been for the intolerable taxation, their unprotected state, the restrictions on their trade and the base paper money, they would "never have meddled with any disturbance"; that they had never opposed themselves against their High Mightinesses the States-General nor against the Honourable Commissary Sluysken, but that their anger had been against the "unlawful servants" of the Company. They stated that they had appointed Carel David Gerotz as their provisional landdrost, J. V. Oertel as provisional secretary, and some other officers, all of which they submitted for the general's approval. They asked to have a parson sent to them, for a church was in course of construction at the expense of the poverty-stricken district, but the parson who had already been sent to them had run away. They concluded by hoping they might be made acquainted with his Excellency's "respectable orders," so that they might know how to conduct themselves. The letter was signed by C. D. Gerotz, Adriaan van Jaarsveld, A. A. Smit, G. F. Enslin, A. H. Krugel (Kruger?), and J. Joubert.

To this, on November 23rd, General Craig replied in reassuring and sympathetic terms. He acquainted them with the abolition of the monopolies and the removal of the restrictions upon trade of which they had long complained and the general freedom which was to replace all this. He assured them that his Majesty's Government had no intention of revenging the quarrels of the Dutch East India Company, or of making itself answerable for the acts of injustice and oppression of which it had been guilty; he desired to drop all notice of what had passed and only to look forward to days of greater prosperity and happiness. Approving of the temporary appointments which had been made, he informed them that as a permanent



CHAP. official, Mr. F. R. Bressler, had been appointed landdrost,  
 III. that gentleman would shortly arrive in Graaff Reinet and relieve Mr. Gerotz. And, undoubtedly as an antidote to the Jacobinism poison, he remarked : " Avarice and private ambition working upon the unenlightened minds of the people under the specious pretence of Liberty has plunged the half of Europe in an abyss of Horror and Misery which ages will not recover it from, and I am well aware that there are people even here whose views from the same motives tend to no less than an attempt to introduce similar effects into this Colony by the same means. I shall rely on the good sense of the inhabitants for the rendering abortive such iniquitous attempts." The Mr. Bressler referred to in this letter had served in De Lille's army at the capture of the Cape. He was chosen by General Craig on account of his being quite unconnected with any party and because he could be trusted as a man of honour and integrity to pursue a neutral and just policy. It was hoped, therefore, that by sending this gentleman instead of returning to them the hated Maynier, the inhabitants of Graaff Reinet would recognise that due deference had been paid to their wishes. Mr. Bressler arrived in Graaff Reinet on February 9th, 1796, and soon found that the disposition of the inhabitants was very different from that which it was supposed had inspired the letter of October 29th. It was but too apparent that there was a determination to refuse to acknowledge any authority or government except that which they themselves had constituted. He was refused admission to the Court House and access to the official documents, and was told that the landdrost and officials then in power had been instructed by the "Representatives of the People" to retain those powers until a meeting which was to be held about a fortnight later, *viz.*, on February 22nd, had considered the matter.

In the meantime the situation was discussed by the "Nationals". A prominent leader of public opinion among them was one Woyer, a surgeon, who had not long before arrived from Europe. Imbued with the prevailing sentiments of the age, he was a violent republican, and, hating everything English, was undoubtedly the moving spirit in the eventual action of the inhabitants. When the "National" Government assembled on the appointed day, Mr. Bressler attended and was asked to

state for what purpose he had come to Graaff Reinet. He read the commission giving him authority, and, as properly constituted landdrost, intimated that he would convene a meeting for the afternoon of that same day. Asked if the "Representatives of the People" would be admitted, he replied that he could not acknowledge them. The "National" ultimatum could not have been more emphatically expressed than by their behaviour on that historical afternoon. Mr. Bressler caused a bell to be rung to assemble the people and had the British flag hoisted. Amid angry uproar it was instantly pulled down and a definite refusal to acknowledge British authority was given. Mr. Bressler was informed that Martinus Prinsloo of the Boschberg had been appointed "Protector of the Voice of the People," and that they were to obey him and were forbidden to take the oath of allegiance to the English king. A month later, *viz.*, March 22nd, the people convened another meeting, presided over by Martinus Prinsloo. Again Mr. Bressler endeavoured to read some official documents of General Craig, but again the meeting refused to listen and confirmed their refusal to take the oath of allegiance. They gave as their excuse that, as the Colony might yet again become a Dutch dependency, they would not be able to justify themselves before the States-General of the Netherlands should they have acknowledged allegiance to some other Power. Seeing they were determined to repudiate him, Mr. Bressler left Graaff Reinet on March 25th and arrived in Cape Town on April 19th.

Early in March a rumour had reached Cape Town to the effect that a body of burghers was in arms with the intention, in the first place, of marching to Graaff Reinet to expel Mr. Bressler, and then of proceeding to Swellendam to dispossess Mr. Faure once more, and to attack those who had taken the oath of allegiance to Britain. Although perhaps unfounded, this rumour gained additional credence in the unexpected re-appearance of Mr. Bressler in Cape Town. Considering that the British had really very few friends throughout the Colony, and that what obedience was shown was due to the inability to resist the force at hand, General Craig felt that the utmost caution and watchfulness were necessary. In view of impending trouble, he sent the 2nd Battalion of the 84th Regiment,

CHAP. with three pieces of cannon, under command of Major King,  
III. to Stellenbosch, to hold themselves in readiness to move in any direction at a moment's notice.

During the next three or four months the distant eastern districts were practically left to themselves. Cut off from the necessary supplies of ammunition and a market for their produce, the disadvantages of the situation began to become apparent. In Graaff Reinet itself, some, particularly the landdrost, Mr. Gerotz, and the secretary, Mr. Oertel, advocated submission, while the inhabitants of the Zuurveld, Boschberg and Bruintjes Hooghte resolutely maintained their own Government. In August, however, an event happened which brought all to be of one mind and, for a time, established such order as these districts had never before experienced.

On the 6th of that month a fleet of nine Dutch men-of-war anchored in Saldanha Bay. They had come with the intention of retaking the Cape from the British, but in consequence of some such hostile movement having been suspected or known, the ships were sighted long before they came to their anchorage. A land force was soon near the shore of the bay, while Admiral Elphinstone took command of a fleet from False Bay. The Dutch ships were therefore hemmed in, and, after firing a few ineffectual shots, surrendered on August 17th.

Before the news of the disaster to the invading fleet could have reached the malcontents of the East, rumours were still rife as to the hostile intentions of the burghers. These rumours probably had their origin in a meeting which was held at Martinus Prinsloo's in the Boschberg in the previous June. The purpose of that meeting was to discuss the question of their particular submission to British rule, as they did not consider themselves bound by any decision which might be arrived at in Graaff Reinet. Not only was it resolved that matters should remain *in statu quo*, but, probably encouraged by the expectation of the fleet from Holland, the more irresponsible talked of using force to compel obedience to the dictates of their Convention.

Not that there was much fear of the worst that a complete combination of all the burghers could effect—considering the large number of troops then in the Colony,—yet General Craig felt the time had arrived when the discontents should realise

the power with which they had to contend, and be convinced that though so far distant from the seat of Government they were nevertheless within the reach of British soldiery. On September 6th, therefore, Major King, in command of five companies of light infantry, 200 cavalry, 150 armed Hottentots (pandours) and three pieces of cannon, moved from Cape Town to the distant frontier. On the 8th a deputation from Graaff Reinet arrived in Cape Town bringing a letter of a most submissive and satisfactory character, signed by forty of the most respectable men. A meeting had been held on August 22nd, when the wiser counsels of Messrs. Gerotz and Oertel had prevailed, and the inhabitants of the Graaff Reinet district had decided to submit and take the oath of allegiance. This, however, referred only to Graaff Reinet and did not include those people in the Zuurveld, Boschberg or Brintjes Hooghte. In consequence of this the troops were recalled on the third day of their march. The surrender of the Dutch fleet very greatly disheartened the "patriots" throughout the Colony, and finding they were cut off from all possible assistance, they could do nothing else but accept the new condition of things. The burghers of these last-named districts, writing on November 12th, from the Little Fish River (now Somerset East), said "they are all perfectly inclined to submit to your Excellency's desire, and with every submission to pay homage and allegiance to his gracious and Royal Majesty of Great Britain in hope and expectation not only, but also in a firm and secure confidence, that your Excellency will please to bury in oblivion every circumstance which may have happened".<sup>1</sup> The sincerity of these people would have been more convincing had their protestation of loyalty not been so largely diluted with requests which might almost be regarded as the price they demanded for their submission. They asked to be allowed to occupy the lands on the Kat and Koonap Rivers, that is, to invade Kaffirland and seize upon tracts of land to the exclusion of the Kaffirs. They desired to be allowed to go among the Kaffirs to retake the cattle which they maintained were stolen in the war of 1793. In this connection, Mr. Bressler, whose opinion was asked on the various parts of this letter, stated that at the period referred to,

<sup>1</sup> *Records of Cape Colony*, vol. i., p. 478.

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the total number of cattle of which the farmers acknowledged to be possessed, when asked for returns for taxation purposes, was 8,004, but when a little later they were asked to give the numbers they had lost by Kaffir inroads, the number was estimated at 65,327! They further asked that all arrears of rent on their loan places might be remitted, that Mr. Bressler should not be sent back to them, and that their minds might be quieted by a proclamation to the effect that they should never be pressed to serve in the Navy or Militia. The document was signed by thirty-one names, including that of Martinus Prinsloo. On December 31st, General Craig sent them an answer in terms kind and conciliatory, yet uncompromisingly firm. He told them that they were subjects of his Majesty "in whom resistance becomes rebellion and in whom it is unbecoming to ask terms or to attempt to treat with that Government to which they owe allegiance and subjection". He assured them that there was no intention of pressing them into either the Army or Navy, though they might be expected to do their duty as armed burghers as had already been the case under their former Government. He was aghast at the idea of giving them permission to take and occupy country which did not belong to them, and could not suffer them to dictate the nomination of the landdrost who should be placed over them. He counselled them to maintain friendly relations with the natives and generally to conduct themselves as a law-abiding people.

For about two years from this the political ferment in the East subsided. There was, however, no doubt but that a brooding over the unhappy conditions of life, together with the continued dissemination of Jacobinism, might at any time renew the disturbances.

At the end of 1796 the British Government decided to appoint some distinguished civilian to act as governor of the Cape and to intrust all military affairs to an officer of high rank, who should also act as lieutenant-governor. As governor, Earl Macartney was appointed on December 28th, 1796. He arrived in Cape Town on May 4th and took the oaths of office on the following day. General Craig was then relieved, after nineteen months of wise and tactful administration.

The rule of the new governor was a marked contrast to that of his predecessor. Unsympathetic, ignorant of the adverse

conditions and circumstances under which the people had so long suffered and having arrived at an age when gout and other burdens of life bore heavily upon him, he was too prone to be vindictive against all whom he suspected of wanting proper regard for the British Government. He thought to eradicate the slightest suspicion of republican tendency by invading the home of a suspected individual with a sergeant and ten common soldiers, who had to be provided with board and lodging at the offender's expense. The festivities connected with a wedding were, on one occasion, brought unceremoniously to a close by the arrival of the customary party of dragoons for no other reason than that the invitations bore the word "citizen" instead of "Mr.". The apology which was tendered was not accepted by the governor until a bond for £1,000, as security for good behaviour in the future, was produced.

The affairs of Graaff Reinet received the new governor's immediate attention. Mr. Bressler, who had remained in Cape Town awaiting the arrival of Earl Macartney, received instructions to resume the office to which he had been appointed by General Craig; also to investigate and report upon certain matters connected with the "interior". But "to avoid totally depending upon him (Bressler), and to discover how far the same objects may appear alike to British and Dutch eyes, I have sent with him Mr. Barrow, a gentleman of my own family, who is well qualified to observe, to judge, and to act, and whose journey, as he is known to be fond of natural history, passes for a tour, not of business, but of curiosity, science and botanical research".<sup>1</sup>

In order to make some compensation for the losses the farmers had sustained, as well as to induce others to return to the places which they had abandoned, all arrears of rent up to September 16th, 1795—the date of the capitulation—were remitted, and a further period of six years was granted to those in the districts of Tarka, Zwagershoek, Sneeuwberg, Nieuwberg, and Zuurveld; provided in all cases that the return was made within four months after the arrival of the landdrost in Graaff Reinet. To maintain peace, all intercourse between the farmers and the Kaffirs was prohibited; all Kaffirs in their employ

<sup>1</sup> *Records*, vol. ii., p. 113. Letter from Earl Macartney to Rt. Hon. Henry Dundas, July 10, 1797.

CHAP. III. were to be sent back to their own country; all white men in Kaffirland to return to the Colony, and then no one to cross the Fish River in one direction or the other without special permission. Acknowledging the Bushmen to be perfect savages, with whom it would always be difficult to maintain good order without much bloodshed, and apparently ignorant of the fact that they were the aboriginal inhabitants of the disturbed districts, they were to be persuaded to leave "the country they had overrun" and to retire to certain indefinite northern regions.<sup>1</sup> Further, in some secret instructions, Mr. Bressler was to consider the advisability of removing the drostdy from Graaff Reinet to Zwartkops, and, with a view of discovering Jacobin machinations, to use his discretion in examining letters passing between the East and Cape Town. Messrs. Bressler and Barrow (the latter had come from England as private secretary to Earl Macartney) arrived in Graaff Reinet on July 30th. Uncertain of the reception which was likely to be accorded to the landdrost, whom the people had previously refused to acknowledge, the party was strengthened by the presence of twelve dragoons, who were to remain at the drostdy as a sort of garrison. It must have been somewhat surprising to these gentlemen on their arrival to have found everything as quiet and so little sign of rebellion as they did. The oaths of allegiance were submissively taken by all, which was more than had been the case in the West. The provisional landdrost, Mr. Gerotz, in respectfully resigning his post in favour of the properly constituted officer, spoke in behalf of the suffering inhabitants, drawing attention to the still deplorable state of the country in consequence of the continued ravages of the Kaffirs.

There can be little doubt but that the history of South Africa would have been very different had the vicissitudes and disabilities of these people in the early days, and the duplicity and thieving character of the natives which often led to unrestrained bloodshed, been better understood by those in authority at a distance. The cheaper policy (for a time at least) of viewing the black as the oppressed and the robbed farmer as the oppressor—of making the worse seem the better cause—almost made self-preservation in a white inhabitant of the East a crime. On being told that a commando was then be-

<sup>1</sup> *Vide Records*, vol. ii., p. 95.

ing organised to recover some recently stolen cattle, Mr. Bressler gave orders for its disbandment, adding that he and Mr. Barrow<sup>1</sup> were immediately setting out to Kaffirland to inquire into these matters. Mr. Barrow tells us that this was most unwelcome intelligence to the farmers as they had hoped to profit by the incursion. Of all the writers on the early colonists, Barrow has been—as in this case—the most unfair and unjust to them. This is all the more unfortunate as his eminence and reputation commanded a world-wide respect for his writings, and a confidence in his statements. He formed his opinions of the Dutch before he could possibly have had any real knowledge of them, and in much the same spirit as that of his master, Earl Macartney, when he called the people of Graaff Reinet savages and in the same breath said, “I neither know, nor can I learn where this Graaff Reinet lies”. In estimating the value of Mr. Barrow’s opinions in these matters, Lichtenstein says: “He (Barrow) had been but a few months at the Cape when the journey was undertaken and he entered upon it totally unacquainted with the general habits and modes of life of the colonists, exceedingly prejudiced against them in every way and very little acquainted with the Dutch language. He regarded every colonist as turbulent, seditious and a disturber of the public peace, who must be judged according to the

<sup>1</sup>Sir John Barrow. Born in 1764 at Dragley Beck, near Ulverstone in Lancashire. He was educated primarily at the Ulverstone Grammar School, but his mathematical and scientific knowledge he acquired as opportunity placed it in his way. At quite an early age he had made considerable progress in astronomy, surveying and navigation. His parents, who were poor, wished him to enter the Church, but an ardent desire to travel and explore rendered this impossible. When fourteen years of age he became a time-keeper in a Liverpool iron foundry, where he remained about two years and then seized the opportunity, which was offered him, of making a voyage in a vessel bound to Greenland on a whaling expedition. Returning to England he taught mathematics until he had the good fortune to be recommended to Lord Macartney, who was about to proceed on an embassy to China. Barrow was made comptroller of the household in his suite. Afterwards he accompanied Lord Macartney to the Cape as private secretary. In 1798 he was appointed Auditor-General of the Cape and in 1800 married Miss Anna Maria Truter, intending to make South Africa his home. The Batavian Government, however, coming into power in 1803, he returned to England and was, shortly after his arrival, appointed Second Secretary of the Admiralty, a post which he held for forty years. He received the LL.D. of Edinburgh in 1824, and was created a baronet in 1835. He died in 1848. Point Barrow, Cape Barrow and Barrow Straits in the North Polar Seas are named after him.



CHAP. utmost rigour of the law, and with whom it was scarcely worth  
III. any man's while to make a further acquaintance."

The expedition to Kaffirland was commenced on August 11th, 1797. Two haemraaden accompanied them, as it was the intention to administer the oath of allegiance in the more distant parts of the district. The route in the first instance was due south to Algoa Bay, which was reached in seven days. The brig *Hope* was found lying at anchor, having been sent from Simon's Town by Admiral Pringle in order to give Mr. Barrow an opportunity of examining and reporting upon the possibilities of the bay. Some time was spent in exploring the surrounding country; journeying westward as far as the present district of Humansdorp, he examined the mineral deposits at the mouth of the Van Staaden's River.<sup>1</sup> The whole of the Zwartkops Valley was, at that time, peopled by only four families.

On August the 29th the party commenced the eastward journey, taking with them an old Hottentot, Willem Haasbeck, to act as interpreter. They crossed the Sunday's River, travelled through the present district of Alexandria and encamped at the Bushman's River—probably at Jager's Drift. Crossing into the present district of Bathurst, they proceeded to the Assegai Bush River and, in the vicinity of the site on which Salem afterwards became established, found the last white inhabitant eastward. A number of waggons with their teams of oxen were awaiting them for the purpose of conveying them through the less travelled country into Kaffirland.

<sup>1</sup> It is of interest at this time to note that Barrow found the deposit of lead of which more has been heard since that date. He says: "Near the mouth of the Van Staaden's River we found in the steep sides of a deep glen several specimens of lead ore. . . . The vein of the ore was about three inches wide and one inch thick, and it appeared to increase both in width and thickness as it advanced under the stratum of rock with which it was covered. . . . According to the assay of Major Van Dehn, 200 lb. of ore contained 100 lb. of pure lead and 8 ozs. of silver." Lichtenstein speaking of the same locality in 1812 says: "The whole side of this hill up to a considerable height consists entirely of the same shining stone that forms the bed of the Silver River (Van Staaden's), and in this the lead ore is enclosed. The vein seems almost perpendicular, stretching from the north-west to the south-east. According to the researches of Major Van Dehn in the year 1792, a hundredweight of earth contains between 50 and 60 lb. of pure lead and about 5 lb. of pure silver." "Some which I brought home with me was examined by the chief physician Klaproth at Berlin. In 100 parts he found 53 parts of lead, 13 of sulphur and a small quantity of silver, scarcely worth mentioning."

At the Kareiga River they came upon a very large number of Kaffirs, who had fled from Kaffirland some years before and had settled themselves in that part of the Zuurveld. Barrow tells us that among these people he met three petty chiefs, whom he asked whether they knew that they were breaking the treaty which fixed the Great Fish River as the boundary of the Colony. They are said to have replied that they were quite aware of it, but that they had come into the Colony for the same reason as the colonists had gone into Kaffirland, *viz.*, to hunt for game. It further transpired that they had fled from their own country in order to be out of the reach of Gaika and were afraid to return, though they expressed a desire to be on friendly terms with that chief. Mr. Barrow told them he would shortly see Gaika and would then intercede for them to re-occupy their old haunts. Leaving the Kareiga the route lay more towards the coast and through a country well populated by natives. With some considerable difficulty they descended a steep and dangerous hill, crossed the Kowie River, and with almost greater difficulty ascended a hill on the opposite side. From the description given it is probable that this was at the "Ebb and Flow," just above the "Horse Shoe" bend. Proceeding thence to the mouth of the Great Fish River, which was found to be impassable, they travelled for two days through the bushy country along its bank and effected a crossing at the first ford—undoubtedly at the present "Kaffir Drift". Ascending the long and steep incline through the Fish River bush on the opposite bank, they had an easy journey over the flat country to near the site where Peddie now stands, and from thence to Gaika's "great place" near the Keiskamma River. Mr. Barrow found Gaika an extremely gentlemanly fellow and spoke in high praise of the Kaffir *ladies*.<sup>1</sup> The conference with the "King" was considered to have been of a satisfactory nature. As in almost every other conference of this nature, the Kaffir chief *promised* anything. Much greater experience and insight into Kaffir character than Mr. Barrow then possessed were necessary in order to estimate the real value of such promises. Retracing his steps and making observations on the flora and fauna of the country, Mr. Barrow and his party arrived back in Graaff Reinet on September 30th.

<sup>1</sup> See Barrow's *Travels*, vol. i., p. 152.

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After a rule of about eighteen months, ill-health compelled Earl Macartney to return to England. He left the Colony in November of 1798. During his term of office his salary and allowances amounted to £12,000 per annum, and on his retirement he was allowed a pension of £2,000 per annum. As the British Treasury was to be put to as little expense as possible on account of the Cape, all this came out of the Colonial Revenue!<sup>1</sup>

The stern and unsympathetic rule of Earl Macartney affected Graaff Reinet to the extent of repressing all outward signs of disaffection to British rule. In the secluded glens of Bruintjes Hooghte, Boschberg and Camdeboo, however, the fomenters of discontent were still at work. Noiseless grumblings, informal meetings and a revival of the old patriotism were combining to prepare the way for further trouble and to increase the tension on the political safety valve, which was kept down only by the fear of the governor. The departure of the "Oude Edleman," together with some idle rumours concerning the reduction of the naval and military force of the Colony, increased these activities until they were brought to a climax by a comparatively insignificant incident which happened in the village of Graaff Reinet in January, 1799. Some years previously, the old Commandant Adriaan van Jaarsveld had borrowed a sum of money from the Orphan Chamber on mortgage of his property and had fallen in arrears in payment of the interest. Visiting Cape Town in 1794, he paid the interest up to December 31st, 1791, and received the regular receipt. But as he became more and more involved in debt, a summons was issued against him on March 30th, 1798, demanding not only the overdue interest but also the capital. When the summons was delivered Van Jaarsveld complained of being charged more interest than was due, and, at the same time, produced the receipt, which apparently showed that he had paid up to December 31st, 1794. On careful examination, however, it became evident that the 1 of the 1791 had been changed to 4 with fraudulent intention. This was further proved by reference to the books in Cape Town. A warrant was then issued calling upon him to appear personally before the Court of Justice in Cape Town. On his neglecting to

<sup>1</sup> The combined salaries of the governor and seven highest officials amounted to £24,700 per annum. The total revenue of the Colony in 1796 was £23,123.

comply with this, the landdrost of Graaff Reinet was instructed to have him arrested and sent thither. CHAP.  
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On January 17th, Van Jaarsveld, ignorant of the existence of the warrant, happened to go into the village of Graaff Reinet. Mr. Bressler seized the opportunity and caused him to be taken. The reason for the arrest having been stated and the charge read, Van Jaarsveld gave some indication of the storm which was brewing in the district by the remark: "Sir, I am afraid this will cause a disturbance among the people". That night he was kept a prisoner in one of the rooms of the drostdy, which was guarded by a sentry of four dragoons. On the next day, two waggons left Graaff Reinet together; in one was Mr. Oertel, the secretary of the district, bound on public business, in the other was the prisoner in charge of a sergeant and two dragoons. The escort was instructed to treat Van Jaarsveld with all the politeness compatible with the situation, but to shoot him should his fellow-burghers make any attempt to rescue him. The day after the departure, it came to Mr. Bressler's knowledge that such an attempt would certainly be made; he therefore despatched a corporal and four more dragoons to accompany the waggons through the dangerous district. On the following day, January 20th, having caused the church bells to be rung after divine service, he explained to the assembled inhabitants the reason of Van Jaarsveld's arrest, and pointed out the consequences of opposing a decree of the Court of Justice. His mind was set temporarily at rest on the 21st, when the additional escort returned with a letter from Mr. Oertel, saying that all was right, though several armed burghers had been seen. This escort returned too soon, however, for shortly after leaving the waggons, Martinus Prinsloo, who had been informed of the arrest, appeared upon the scene. He had hurriedly collected about forty armed burghers in the Bruintjes Hooghte district and proceeded with them to the attack. On nearing the waggons two of the burghers, Pieter Erasmus and Barend de Klerk, were sent forward to demand the release of Van Jaarsveld, adding that if this were not done peaceably, the means were at hand to enforce compliance with the demand. Mr. Oertel expostulated with them and endeavoured to show them that they misunderstood the reason of Van Jaarsveld's arrest, and pointed out that it was no more than an act of justice to

CHAP. allow him to proceed to Cape Town to defend himself against  
III. the charge which had been preferred against him. All this  
availed nothing. Van Jaarsveld was a prominent man among  
the burghers, and at that time his presence was especially  
necessary in carrying out some plot of which a hint was given  
by Prinsloo—who had drawn nearer to the waggons—to Van  
Jaarsveld in his remark: "You are wanted because there is  
something spreading in Swellendam which is known to only  
a few". Resistance being useless, Van Jaarsveld joined his  
friends. The escort returned to Graaff Reinet and Mr. Oertel  
continued his journey to Cape Town, where he arrived on  
February 16th and reported the matter.

Having thus thrown down the gauntlet to Government  
authority, the burghers made no further attempt to conceal  
their sentiments and ill-devised plots. Armed meetings were  
convened in the name of the "Voice of the People," and mes-  
sengers were sent to the various districts soliciting the aid of  
all in a general rebellion. About a week after the rescue, Prins-  
loo and Van Jaarsveld, having collected together about 100  
armed men, marched to one of the drifts across the Sunday's  
River not far from the drostdy house. On seeing this Mr.  
Bressler sent two of his haemraaden to inquire the reason of  
the warlike display. They returned in company with the  
leaders. In explanation of their conduct, it was stated, in sub-  
stance, that it was believed that in seizing Van Jaarsveld in an  
unguarded moment, and without due notice, an unfair advantage  
had been taken. They refused to believe that the alleged falsi-  
fying of a receipt had anything to do with it, but declared that  
it was on account of his former action in the "patriot" cause,  
and that what had happened to him might at any time be the  
case with any of them. As the force at the disposal of the  
landdrost was so small, he could do, as he did, little else than  
endeavour to calm their minds by making a careful profession of  
sympathy, and to await anxiously the assistance which he felt  
sure would soon be on the way from Cape Town. The insur-  
gents had no particular plan of campaign. They could come  
to no definite agreement as to whether, having, as a preliminary,  
shot the small military guard, Mr. Bressler should be hanged  
or sent to some of their friends in Kaffirland, or whether they  
themselves should form an alliance with the Kaffirs. As a

practical outcome of their deliberations, they loafed aimlessly about the village for a time and then dispersed to their several homes.

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Associated with the ringleaders in the Colony, there was in Kaffirland at this time one of their number who exercised a powerful influence among both Europeans and natives, and who played an active part in these disturbances. Conraad du Buys had been a burgher in the Swellendam district. His republican enthusiasm, combined with a superior eloquence and energetic mind, gained for him a popularity and prominence among those who sought to establish their own government in the East. He was violently opposed to the admission of British rule into South Africa ; but, being powerless to prevent it, yet unwilling to submit, he withdrew from the Colony at the time of the capitulation and settled in Kaffirland. He took up his residence among the people who, after the tribal disturbance and consequent division in 1796, became the Amangqika or Gaikas. He used his influence and power in favour of the young chief Gaika against the usurper Ndhlabi. The victory of the former in the fight which ensued gave Buys an additional status in the tribe, and this was further increased by his marrying the young chief's mother. The exiled burgher of Swellendam thus became in fact, though not perhaps in name, a powerful Kaffir chief, whose proximity to the Colony could not be viewed with indifference. He refused to return to the Colony when ordered to do so by Earl Macartney in 1798 and was therefore declared to be an outlaw. The traveller Lichtenstein, who met him, says: "His uncommon height, for he measured nearly seven feet, the strength, yet admirable proportions of his limbs, his excellent courage, his firm countenance, his high forehead, his whole mien and a certain dignity in his movements, made altogether a most pleasing impression".<sup>1</sup>

Buys was in intimate league with the leaders of the rebellion. He was present at most of their secret meetings, and, actuated by his hatred of the British, urged on the others to excesses which a little calm reflection and wiser counsel would have shown them could not but lead to their own destruction.

The first meeting convened for the purpose of giving de-

<sup>1</sup> Lichtenstein, vol. ii., p. 211.

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III.

finite and practical shape to their sentiments was held at the farm of Prinsloo about three weeks before the arrest of Van Jaarsveld. Buys was present. It was decided to call in the assistance of the Kaffirs and to arrange for a general uprising on the following February 10th. Mr. Bressler and his family were to be carried into Kaffirland. Circular letters to that effect, signed by the "Voice of the People," were sent to the inhabitants at the Gamtoos, Zwartkops, and Bushman's Rivers. Some of the field-cornets, however, not only expressed their disapproval of the measures, but reported all this to the landdrost. The movement had therefore to be modified and postponed until the 17th. In the meantime, *viz.*, on February 13th, Mr. Bressler received a letter from the wife of Barend Burgers, a farmer living at a distance of about three-quarters of an hour from Graaff Reinet, stating that twenty-five armed burghers had arrived at her place from the Zwartkops. On the 14th, three armed men were seen skulking in the bed of the river near the drostdy, and from that time Mr. Bressler found himself carefully watched by these people. He, therefore, kept his dragoons on the alert and in readiness.

On February 17th, in pursuance of their preliminary deliberations, 104 armed men, headed by Buys and Van Jaarsveld, met at Barend Burger's farm. Buys had endeavoured to work up the anger and violence of his followers by spreading a report that Mr. Bressler had instigated the Kaffirs to rise against them, and that he had provided the munitions of war for that purpose. As evidence of this, he produced the following letter in Mr. Bressler's handwriting, addressed to the field-commandant, Van Rensburg: "Good Friend. Herewith you receive 4 tinder boxes, 8 knives, 1 roll of brass wire, 4 bunches of beads and 12 small looking-glasses, together with about 30 lbs. of gunpowder and 60 lbs. of lead. Please give to Malan and Thoho each of them one knife and two looking-glasses and all the residue to Conga (Cungwa). Please also to inquire of Chyka whether any ship has lately stranded. I am, your good friend,—F. R. BRESSLER. Graaff Reinet, December 8th, 1797." It must have been well known to all that Buys was guilty of deliberate misrepresentation, and that the explanation of the letter was to be found in the customary policy of distributing trinkets to the natives in order to maintain peace, and

that the powder and lead was the usual supply to the field-commandants on the isolated outposts. The insurgents talked further of their intention to send the landdrost and his family to Kaffirland, as a set-off against the banishment of one P. Delpont by Earl Macartney for refusing to take the oath of allegiance. None of their plans, however, got beyond the stage of talk, for with the exception of one or two, all were lacking in the necessary courage to strike a definite blow or to maintain their ground when there was any probability of attack. The next day the mob moved from the farm and took up a position at the drift on the Sunday's River, near the drostdy. The village was invaded, but no act of violence or any breach of the peace was committed beyond that of keeping the poor landdrost in a state of constant fear and anxiety and compelling him to write and sign an insolent letter to the governor. It was demanded that the decree of outlawry against Buys should be cancelled, that Van Jaarsveld should be released from his "prise de corps," and that no presents should be given to the Kaffirs and no communication of any kind be made with that nation except through "our fellow burgher Conraad du Buys". Shortly afterwards, however, although some burghers were always posted near him to watch the correspondence, Mr. Bressler found the means of getting a letter despatched to Cape Town *via* Swellendam. He acquainted his Excellency with the circumstances under which the insolent communication had been written and asked him to ignore it.

Although no intelligence concerning the movement of troops had up to this time reached the district, yet the rebels entertained little doubt but that the attention of the military would be turned towards them. They therefore stationed a party of thirty of their number on the road leading to Cape Town and despatched another party of about the same number to the Coega, to stop the passage of any soldiers who might land at Algoa Bay. Their ignorance of the uselessness of both these moves is to be accounted for by the fact that a proper, disciplined military force had never visited their districts. A camp was formed at the Coega, nominally under the command of Jan Botha, "the left-handed," another who had taken up his residence in Kaffirland to evade British rule. He also was sanguine of obtaining assistance from the natives,



CHAP. and for this purpose left the camp in charge of Gerrit Rauten-  
III. bach and went into Kaffirland, but failing in his object did not return to the Coega.

When Mr. Oertel, on his arrival in Cape Town on February 16th, reported the state of affairs in Graaff Reinet, the acting governor, Major-General Dundas, took immediate steps to suppress the disorder. General Vanderleur was put in command of 200 men, consisting partly of dragoons and partly of disciplined Hottentots (pandours); and on the following day the march to Graaff Reinet, by way of the Swellendam district, was commenced. A messenger had been sent on ahead to Mr. Faure, the landdrost of Swellendam, instructing him to organise supplies of food and forage along the route through his district, to stop all communications with Graaff Reinet, and to despatch with all possible haste some trustworthy person to Mr. Bressler, assuring him that help was coming and that vigorous measures were being taken to support his authority. Further, on this same day, February 17th, a proclamation was issued, commanding all farmers along the route of march to remain at their homes. A sergeant and four dragoons were stationed in the Hex River pass in order to cut off communication with the interior in that direction. Besides the overland force, two vessels, the *Hope* and the *Star*, having on board two companies of the 91st Regiment and two field-pieces, were despatched to Algoa Bay.

In the march through the Swellendam district General Vanderleur found that the rebellious emissaries from Graaff Reinet had exercised considerable influence upon the inhabitants. Two brothers, Jacobus and Frederick Botha, had been busily employed in riding from farm to farm, inciting the people to take up arms. To this activity may perhaps be ascribed the existence of the supplies of powder and freshly cast leaden bullets found in some of the houses. These two men were captured and removed out of harm's way to the Castle at Cape Town. One, Rautenbach, known to the patriotic as "Freedom's Child," was, in spite of the proclamation, also from home; he was most probably at that time organising the resistance at the Coega which was to bar effectually the interior to troops arriving by sea. On March 7th the overland detachment arrived at their halting place, which was the farm

of a widow Scheepers, the site of the present town of Uitenhage. The following day the general with one dragoon visited Algoa Bay, where the *Star* was found lying at anchor. This vessel had arrived six days previously, namely, on March 2nd.

Major MacNab and Captain Campbell were in command of the detachment on the *Star*. The anchors having been dropped at about one o'clock, all the men and baggage were before evening piloted through the heavy surf and safely landed on the sandy beach. Early in the afternoon the two officers with twenty grenadiers set out from the landing place with a view of finding a suitable place to form a camp. The spot chosen was a farm about four and a half miles distant, called Papenkuilsfontein, in the occupation of Thomas Ignatius Ferreira, where a plentiful supply of sheep and oxen was found. This farm is now the historical Cradock Place,<sup>1</sup> situated on the northern outskirts of Port Elizabeth. The baggage and stores were removed from the beach to the farm on the following day, Captain Campbell with the remainder of the detachment having guarded it through the night. This landing was not effected unobserved by the enemy. One Hans Knoetz, acting as scout for the Coega party, had watched the proceedings and conveyed the intelligence to the Boer camp. On the 8th the second vessel, the *Hope*, arrived, bringing the contingent under Major Abercrombie. These also encamped at Ferreira's. On the 12th the whole of the infantry force joined the Hottentots and cavalry at General Vanderleur's camp, eighteen miles distant, and on the 13th the combined column commenced the march to Graaff Reinet. It was understood that the enemy had taken possession of a strong pass named the "Poort," about a day's march from the general's camp and where a few determined and good shots could create much havoc among troops while passing through. It was felt certain that such an attack would be made at this place and all were therefore on the alert. To the surprise, however, and also, it may be added, disappointment of the troops, no opposition of any kind was offered. The courage of the "Child of Freedom" and his followers seems to have diminished as the force drew nearer, and—instead of forming an impassable barrier between

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, lately destroyed by fire.

CHAP. the coast and the interior—they scattered without firing a  
III. single shot. Major MacNab, in his report of the march, said :  
“In my life I never saw ground more favourable for that purpose ; I am well convinced if the rebels do make a stand, they can never do it with so much advantage of ground as the Poort would have afforded them. Our column took more than an hour in marching through it.” The failure of this opposition was attributed to the non-arrival of Jan Botha with the expected assistance from Kaffirland. The remainder of the march to Graaff Reinet was, in like manner, quite uneventful. The only Boers met with was a party of Sneeuwberg burghers who welcomed the column, and as it approached the village became more fierce in their profession of assistance to the landdrost and expressions of disapproval of all that had happened. The troops arrived in Graaff Reinet on the night of the 19th and the morning of the 20th.

It must have been somewhat surprising to have found that their destination at the end of their long journey was a collection of the dozen or so of small wattle and daub houses which constituted the Graaff Reinet of those days, rendered still more insignificant in appearance by the high and precipitous mountains which almost surround the small plain on which they stood. It was found further, that the magnitude of the resistance to be opposed was commensurate with the extent of the centre of the disturbance. Shortly previous to the arrival of the troops, armed burghers had been patrolling the village, but on realising the situation, they followed the example of their compatriots nearer the coast and sought safety at a distance. On the morning of the 20th, fifty-three of the Sneeuwberg Burgher Cavalry rode into the village in fours. Halting and forming up in front of the British flag, they fired three volleys in honour of the general and gave other unequivocal signs of their attachment to the Government. Of these men, however, the landdrost remarked that, when their assistance had been solicited, only three of these gallant lads had volunteered to go forward. Four days later, further satisfactory and peaceable symptoms became manifest in the arrival of two delegates from the insurgents, carrying to the general a petition of pardon. General Vanderleur told them that “until those who were concerned in the late daring revolt come in a body

to lay down their arms and sue for pardon, I do not feel myself authorised to enter upon any treaty with them". He further stated that those willing to submit might meet him at Willem Prinsloo's farm at the Boschberg,<sup>1</sup> on April 6th, after which date he would accept neither excuse nor submission, but with the troops under his command would compel them to do what they might have done voluntarily.

In the beginning of April, Adriaan van Jaarsveld and his son Zacharias were quietly arrested by a party of soldiers, which had been sent to Bruintjes Hooghte for that purpose. The general, with the greater portion of his force, left Graaff Reinet for Prinsloo's farm, where, on April 6th, the appointed day, one hundred and twelve of the insurgents, including the most active spirit in all this trouble, Martinus Prinsloo, surrendered. Eighteen of the most guilty were sent to Algoa Bay and put on board the sloop-of-war *Rattlesnake*, which shortly before had arrived with further reinforcements. The prisoners were conveyed to the Castle at Cape Town, arriving there on June 12th.<sup>2</sup> Conraad Buys, Jan Botha and five others almost equally guilty, did not surrender, but fled into distant Kaffirland. A reward of £200 for each, either dead or alive, was offered, but without result.

<sup>1</sup> Now Somerset East.

<sup>2</sup> Owing to the native disturbances immediately following, these people were not brought to trial before August, 1800. Sentences were pronounced on September 3rd, as follows: Prinsloo and Van Jaarsveld to be hanged and buried beneath the gallows. Theunis Botha, Gert H. Rautenbach, Barend Jac. Bester, Jean Isaac Bonte, Petrus Fred Rautenbach, Godlieb E. C. Koch, Gerhardus Scheepers, Pieter Ignatius van Kamer, Lucas Meyer, Zacharias van Jaarsveld, to witness the execution and to be banished from the Colony for life. Willem Grobbelaar and Jacob Johannes Kruger for ten years, Willem Venter and Paul Venter to be imprisoned for two years, Gert Botha and Johan Kruger sen. to be set at liberty. Beyond keeping them in prison, the governor, Sir George Yonge, was disinclined to do anything further without instructions from England, hence delay arose. In May, 1801, Lord Hobart, Secretary of State for the Colonies, expressed extreme surprise, in one of his despatches, that the sentences of the Court of Justice had not been carried into effect, and desired that the law should be allowed to take its course. In December of the same year, Major-General Dundas answered this stating that he had taken upon himself to incur further delay. Feelings of humanity and a desire to avoid effusion of blood prompted him to plead for some modification of the sentences, all the more so, as these people had readily surrendered themselves when they had it easily in their power to place themselves beyond the reach of the law. They remained in captivity until the Colony was taken over by the Batavian Republic, when they were all released, on March 30th, 1803. Adriaan van Jaarsveld had in the meantime died in captivity.

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As there appeared to be no further need of the presence of a strong force in the East, the troops commenced to retrace their steps to Algoa Bay, preparatory to returning to Cape Town.

Thus ended, as far as the Dutch inhabitants were concerned, a commotion which was scarcely worthy the name of rebellion. Although there had been much loud talk and threats of violence, the necessary courage to strike any blow was conspicuously wanting. No damage of any kind was done throughout, and excepting a *feu de joie*, not a shot was fired on either one side or the other. The possibility of the arrival of troops within a month from their departure from Cape Town demonstrated that the "interior" was not so inaccessible to Government control as had been generally supposed to be the case. From this time little is heard of any further trouble of this kind in Graaff Reinet. All the calamitous and stirring events of later years taking place in regions more to the south and east, Graaff Reinet sinks into insignificance in Eastern Province history. The minds of the people became gradually disabused of the false and perverted Jacobin notions which had been disseminated by designing persons; the abolition of monopolies and freedom of trade, the equality of all men before the law and the desire of the new-comers to extend the hand of friendship, gave a wider and better meaning to their beloved and much talked of *Gelykheid*, *Vryheid* and *Broederschap*.

## CHAPTER IV.

### CONTINUED STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE.

WHILE the events narrated in the last chapter were taking place, and the disquietude consequent upon them was subsiding, a storm of a far more serious and alarming character was brewing in the regions nearer to the Fish River.

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In February of 1799, when the minds of both Dutch and British were engrossed with the Van Jaarsveld affair, and when, consequently, the whole attention of each was occupied with preparations in view of possible hostilities, Ndhlabi with many hundreds of followers was again crossing the Fish River into the Zuurveld and occupying the coast regions of Lower Albany. This chief, it will be remembered, had, two years previously, become a prisoner of Gaika, but at the date referred to, effected his escape. This had been brought about, in part, by time having moderated the bitterness of the feud which existed between the adherents of these two chiefs, but, more chiefly, by the great and unpardonable offence which Gaika had given by seizing a young and attractive wife belonging to his captive uncle and adding her to his own establishment. This outrage aroused great indignation, not only among the neighbouring tribes, but among Gaika's own people and gained for Ndhlabi a widespread sympathy. Many of Gaika's adherents deserted him and joined Ndhlabi, who was thus enabled to break free and with increased numbers to migrate to the western side of the Fish River. Arriving in these parts, his ranks were further largely reinforced—excepting the Amangqunukwebi under Cungwa—by all those Kaffirs who had remained in the Zuurveld after the nominal cessation of hostilities in 1793.

The Amangqunukwebi seemed to lead an existence apart from the other tribes, and to have no disposition to be mixed up in their quarrels or to take part in their predatory excursions, though they were by no means averse from carrying on

CHAP. the same on their own account. This independence may have  
 IV. arisen, partly, on account of the contempt with which they were regarded by other tribes, in consequence of the founder not being of royal blood and a lineal descendant of Xosa—as all the other chiefs were supposed to be—and, partly, on account of a jealousy with which they seemed to regard invaders from Kaffirland into the Zuurveld, where they had been in occupation some years and which they probably now regarded as their own pastures and preserves. Moving farther westward as Ndhlabi and his hordes poured over the Fish River, they came to be concentrated in the country between the Bushman's and Sunday's Rivers, through which region lay the route which General Vanderleur had chosen for his return to Algoa Bay from Graaff Reinet. These people, ignorant of the reason of the presence of the armed force in the country, and perhaps thinking there was an intention to drive them eastward, attacked the soldiers while they were passing through a thicket. No damage, however, was done.

This unexpected hostile action caused the general some concern as to the danger likely to be encountered in the remainder of the march. He, therefore, sent on ahead a party of twenty men under command of Lieutenant Chumney of the 81st Regiment, to reconnoitre the country towards the coast, while he cautiously brought along the remainder of the force. Receiving no communications from the scouting party and fearing for their safety, he moved towards the bushy country near the Bushman's River, in order to give them an opportunity of rejoining his column, when he was himself attacked with great fury by large numbers. A fierce fight ensued in which many Kaffirs were killed, though the general suffered no loss. After this, he met with no further interference and continued the march to his camp at Ferreira's farm, Papenkuilsfontein (Cradock Place). It afterwards transpired that Lieutenant Chumney's party had been suddenly surrounded in the bush by a large number of the savages, who had murdered the lieutenant and all, except four, of his men.

This reappearance of the Kaffirland invaders into the Zuurveld meant for the impoverished and harassed farmers the laying aside again of all their private and domestic concerns and journeying forth for weeks on the hated and, as ex-

perience had too often proved, useless commando. In May a large body of farmers collected in the district of Stellenbosch and took the field under Van der Walt; while at the same time Hendrick van Rensburg was forming another band in Graaff Reinet. While these activities were in progress, the threatened trouble was assuming a magnitude far greater than was suspected and eventually taxed to the utmost all the capabilities of the available military and civil force.

Towards the middle of the eighteenth century the petty conflicts between the earlier Dutch settlers and Hottentots gradually ceased, and in their place a kind of symbiosis came into existence—a living peaceably with one another, aiding and supporting each other in the recapture of stolen cattle from their common enemy, the Bushman. This relation between Boer and Hottentot gradually developed into that of master to servant, the men being cattle herds while the women became servants about the homesteads. In the Western Province this, on the whole, worked amicably; but in the Eastern, owing to the continued distressing and unhappy conditions under which both alike lived, troubles arose between master and man, for which neither was wholly to blame. Circumstances compelled the farmer to place considerable reliance and responsibility on the Hottentot, in submitting to him the care of the stock. The Hottentot, indolent and lazy by nature, and not possessing that high sense of duty which might be expected in a more civilised people, frequently neglected or abused his trust and brought upon himself personal chastisement. That the life of these people in the service of the Boers was an unenviable one is not to be denied, but it is difficult to conceive how it could have been otherwise, considering the vicissitudes of the Boer farmer's own life in those days. The remuneration which could be afforded in the poverty-stricken districts was small and probably inadequate to the services rendered. On these accounts, the Hottentots may be considered to have been unjustly treated; though their case was certainly no worse than, if as bad as, that of the victims of the sweating systems which have disgraced highly civilised countries in later years. This is probably the extent of the cruelties which were inflicted upon the Hottentots by the Boers and which have been so much exaggerated at subsequent periods. The sense of oppression and the fear



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of resisting it kept the Hottentots in a kind of slavery from which they were at any time prepared to endeavour to free themselves. The Van Jaarsveld disturbances furnished them with ample opportunities of which they took advantage. Perhaps the Jacobin contagion of the time extended itself even to them, causing them to entertain their own particular views of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. Be that as it may, the greater number deserted their employers and took with them what guns and ammunition the excitement of the time placed within their reach. When General Vanderleue was arranging his Graaff Reinet expedition in March, he collected most of these people together and added them to his forces, for he found them perfectly willing to join the British against their late masters. This soon proved to be a most disastrous step, for when the turn of affairs rendered the presence of the soldiers no longer necessary, and they consequently commenced the return to Cape Town, the Hottentots then realised their situation. By their behaviour they had cut off their retreat to their former masters, and they realised full well the treatment they would receive from the enraged Boers should they again fall into their hands. Certain as they were of the Boers being their enemies, they seemed to have entertained doubts as to how far the British were to be trusted. They saw the forces they had undertaken to assist leaving them unprotected, and they considered that their wives and children had been unduly neglected by the British while they themselves were on active service. But that which, more than anything else, inspired them with the idea that some treachery was intended, was the fact that, in order to maintain peace and tranquillity, General Vanderleue had ordered all the Hottentots to deliver up their guns and ammunition. That the side on which they had offered to fight should, when their services were no longer required, disarm them, seemed to them incomprehensible. About a hundred were allowed to retain their arms and formed part of a Hottentot or Cape Corps. The greater number, however, in this state of distrust of the white man, found a solution of their difficulty in coalition with the black man. This was all the easier as the invading Kaffirs were prepared to welcome to their ranks those who possessed firearms and knew how to use them. The Hottentots accordingly formed themselves

into bands under three prominent leaders, Boesak, Klaas Stuurman and Hans Trompetter (after whom Trompetter's Drift on the Fish River is named), and rendered themselves independent of both Briton and Boer by seeking refuge among the Aman-dhlambi in the Zuurveld.

This dangerous federation of the discontented and revengeful Hottentot with the Kaffir, always ready for any venture which promised spoil, boded trouble of no small magnitude. From the native point of view, the time was a most favourable one for a combined attack upon the Colony. The greater number of the troops had embarked for Cape Town; the most competent leaders among the Boers were prisoners, and the white inhabitants were poorly supplied with arms and ammunition, partly on account of the thefts by the Hottentots and partly because the Government had cut off the supply of gunpowder in consequence of the rebellion.

In taking a general review of the many invasions which the natives have made upon the Colony, one cannot but be struck with the characteristic suddenness of the first attack. Their tactics seem always to have been the result of careful and scheming forethought combined with concert in giving them effect. Watching their opportunity, and without the preliminary formalities of parley or issue of ultimatum, they swooped down in their hundreds, or it may be thousands, and completed the works of murder and robbery in the nearer districts before the more remote had the least suspicion of the impending danger.

Such was the outbreak of the Hottentots and Kaffirs combined in July of 1799. About the middle of that month, when the satisfactory settlement of the political troubles gave promise of tranquillity and such prosperity as the natural conditions of the country could create, Mr. Bressler received a letter from Carel J. de Jager, the field-cornet of the Winterhoek, conveying the alarming intelligence that eight people—the Scheepers family—had been murdered, and that twenty other individuals, six men, fourteen women and children, were missing. Further, that the buildings of these people had been destroyed by fire, and 700 cattle, 3,000 sheep, fifty horses, eight waggons and a quantity of powder and lead carried off. From another part of the district, news of the capture of 500 cattle

CHAP. and 2,000 sheep arrived simultaneously. The whole country  
IV. from Graaff Reinet to the sea was soon in a state of panic. Families hurriedly abandoned their homes and sought safety at a distance,—no new experience to many of them. By July 31st, twenty-nine persons had been murdered. As the inhabitants fled over the Gamtoos River into the Swellendam district, the blacks followed up and obtained possession of the wooded fastnesses between that and the Loerie River, carrying on their career of murder and desolation through the Lange Kloof as far as the present district of Oudtshoorn. By August 3rd there were only two families remaining on the east of the Gamtoos River.

General Vanderleur, with the few remaining troops, was encamped at Ferreira's. The total force consisted of forty of the 91st Regiment, thirty dragoons and a small number of Hottentots of the Cape Corps, who had not deserted. The country was so completely in possession of the blacks that communication by land between the camp and Cape Town was entirely cut off. Any material assistance could arrive only by sea. It was clear that considerable time must elapse before intelligence of his situation and the general state of affairs could reach headquarters and the necessary steps be taken to relieve him. He could, therefore, do little more than concentrate his small force and maintain the state of siege in which he found himself. A source of anxiety to all was the non-arrival from the interior of a detachment of forty men of the 91st under Captain Campbell. These had been detained on duty at Bruintjes Hooghte, and did not commence the return to Algoa Bay until after the outbreak, and consequently found the usual routes to the Zwartkops beset by the enemy. They were, in consequence, compelled to make a long detour to the west and to find a passage over the Lange Kloof Mountains. They reached the general's camp after a march of eighteen days.

The little camp with its supply of stores and cattle was the only part of the southern district over which the enemy had not complete control, and it was not for want of attention and daring that this also did not fall into their hands. On August 10th an opportunity for attack seemed to present itself. The camp was in a somewhat ungarded condition.

An officer and twenty infantry were at the landing-place, four and a half miles distant, endeavouring to bring up a field-piece from the shore and the horses were grazing at a distance from the camp, when the natives made a sudden rush upon the place. They succeeded in capturing all the sheep and some calves and getting clear away with them. As soon as possible, thirty dragoons, twenty-five light infantry and some Hottentots, with a three-pounder, went in pursuit. They followed up the enemy as far as a thick bush or thicket about six miles distant. Shots were fired into the bush and the enemy followed up. Many of them were believed to have been killed and nearly all the live stock was recaptured.

While these events were taking place, the Government was not altogether ignorant of the hostile intentions of the Hottentots. On July 19th previously, Mr. Bressler, in a defenceless position and fearing for the safety of the drostdy, had communicated with General Dundas, the acting governor, and had given a full account of all which had, up to that date, happened. On receipt of this intelligence, General Dundas took immediate steps. So many vague and contradictory reports had reached Cape Town, that in order to discover for himself the true state of affairs as well as to superintend the necessary military operations, he left for the East on August 7th, having despatched on the previous day the light company of the 61st Regiment and fifty dragoons to Swellendam. The general took the same route and remained in that village nearly a week. While there he seems to have had some misgivings as to the probable success of his forces and to have formed the determination to exhaust all the resources of conciliation before appealing to arms. He had already tried this with the invading Kaffirs. Some of the officers and men under General Vanderleur's command had been instructed to carry presents to those people with a view of inducing them to retire into Kaffirland. The mission was a failure. Instead of establishing peaceable relations, "a petty warfare between his Majesty's troops and the savages took place".<sup>1</sup> To carry out his intentions on a larger scale, he sent for Mr. Maynier, whom he believed to have considerable influence with both Hottentots

<sup>1</sup> *Records*, vol. iii., p 52.

CHAP. and Kaffirs and who was to be entrusted with the embassy to  
 IV. the hostile chiefs. The march was continued through the Lange Kloof. The force under General Dundas was further strengthened by the addition of the Grenadiers of the 61st Regiment, fifty dragoons of the 8th Regiment, and the light company of the 81st with one field-piece. The force now consisted of nearly 800. On arriving at the Oliphant's River in the present district of Oudtshoorn, they were further reinforced by the Stellenbosch commando under Van der Walt. The latter had prevented the enemy from proceeding further westward than that river. General Dundas, in his reports of this march, did but scant justice to the courage of the Dutch inhabitants of the districts through which he passed. He spoke of them as "timid to an extent beyond example" and "totally unfit for military duty," and was on that account not surprised at the success of the enemy. Had he more clearly realised the circumstances in which he found them—poorly supplied with arms and ammunition, their leaders prisoners of war and they themselves dispirited by their hopeless poverty and misery—his remarks concerning them might have been couched in more commendable terms. These people inured from their earliest years to savage warfare were usually able to command a fair amount of success when allowed to fight their battles in their own way.

When the march through the 200 miles of the Lange Kloof had been accomplished, General Dundas succeeded in communicating with, and reviving the spirits of, General Vanderleur, whose anxiety was daily increasing in consequence of his isolation and threatened failure of provisions. The bushy and hilly country about the Gamtoos River was thickly infested with Hottentots and Kaffirs, and thus the passage through the river was dangerous. General Dundas was warned against attempting it without an escort of less than 100 men. General Vanderleur had barely escaped with his life in that same place a short time previously. On August 19th, accompanied by Major Sherlock and a small party, but without escort, he had been scouring the country and was returning to the camp at Ferreira's, when, while passing over the Gamtoos, a most determined and savage attack was made. The baggage horses were exhausted, having travelled over

sixty miles without food, and had therefore to be abandoned together with all the clothing, papers, etc., with which they were burdened. All fled for life. The general's servant was killed and a Mr. Hollings was so severely wounded as to be unable to proceed unassisted. Major Sherlock, with great bravery, lifted the man, placed him upon his own horse and with difficulty got him out of danger. Without any such molestation, however, General Dundas completed his march, and, early in September, a combination with the force under General Vanderleur was effected. The numbers thus formed could be still further increased by the available sailors from two ships, which were lying at anchor in Algoa Bay, four and a half miles distant. These vessels were the *Rattlesnake*, a sloop-of-war of eighteen guns, and the store-ship, the *Camel*. The former, which had arrived on August 9th, acted as guard-ship and magazine for the surplus ammunition. It was for the purpose of obtaining one of the guns of this ship as well as some other necessities, that the party of soldiers left the camp on the 10th and tempted the watchful enemy to attack it. The *Camel* arrived at a later date, and brought from Cape Town, besides some stores, a blockhouse, in pieces, and a further detachment of soldiers and the artificers who had been sent to put the blockhouse together,—eighty in all. The sailors had actually assisted in guarding the camp. Forty of them with two six-pounders were landed, as it was believed that the enemy, elated with their success over the Boers, would probably make another attack.

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Even with all this force at his command, General Dundas was reluctant to make any hostile move against the natives. In a report to Sir George Yonge subsequently, he stated "that it was impossible for regular troops to follow up the savages into their fastnesses and over wide mountainous country, where the natives could always get the best of it". Instead of well-merited punishment for the horrors which had been committed, conciliation and protestation of friendship were considered as the surest means of establishing peace and permanent tranquillity. General Vanderleur, however, on the other hand, had given it as his opinion that "every advance on our part towards reconciliation will be construed into timidity, and nothing but a sound drubbing will bring these savages to any

CHAP. reason". Conciliation at the stage at which it was attempted  
IV. was an easy matter. All there was to be stolen was in the possession of the robbers, and their thirst for blood and destruction being temporarily satisfied, there was nothing further to be desired but peace and retirement in which to enjoy the spoil. All this notwithstanding, Mr. Maynier showed great courage in making his way unarmed to the country between the Sunday's and Bushman's Rivers, where the whole confederacy was in arms, and carrying the message of peace to them. The usual presents seem to have been exchanged for the reiterated empty promises to observe the boundaries and to refrain from further depredation. By this, peace was considered to have been restored in the land. To the wretched white inhabitants, however, this peace promised to be anything but a blessing. They saw their stolen cattle, horses and sheep still in possession of the marauders and no steps taken for their recovery. The Kaffirs remained *in statu quo*, and from the nature of the negotiations, virtually received permission to occupy the lands they had invaded. So far, then, from any punishment being meted out to the perpetrators of these robberies and bloodshed, the "restoration of peace without recourse to the exertions of the troops" practically amounted to a reward for the commission of these atrocities. Side by side with this, the Boers saw their own leaders carried off to imprisonment hundreds of miles away for taking part in an affair in which not a single shot had been fired nor the slightest material damage done. The attitude adopted by General Dundas towards these two peoples was in perfect keeping. In writing to Deputy-Secretary Ross<sup>1</sup> he seems to have allowed his negrophilist enthusiasm to have got the better of his reason, for he says: "I believe the intention of the Caffres and Hottentots is merely to possess themselves of as many cattle and to destroy as many habitations as possible";—that was all,—just a mirthful exuberance of high spirits, unworthy of being taken into serious account; while the despoiled, ruined and murdered Boers, probably on account of their total lack of proper appreciation of this humour, are referred to as "a troublesome and disaffected race," and "are the strongest compound of cowardice and cruelty, of treachery

<sup>1</sup> *Records*, vol. ii., p. 498.

and cunning, and of most of the bad qualities, with few, very few, good ones of the human mind".

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Most precarious, at this time, was the establishment of British rule in the Eastern Province, and perhaps only in a less degree, that also in the rest of the Colony. Not only was the country weakened internally, partly by the Dutch feeling themselves despised and unduly severely treated by the Government, and partly by the contempt the natives seemed to have for the military display made against them; but it was also in danger from the eager disposition of the Batavian Government and the French sympathisers to attack it from without. Two very determined attempts were made. The first was at the instigation of Woyer, the revolutionary surgeon of Graaff Reinet. He had escaped from the Colony when troubles thickened, having succeeded in getting a passage to Batavia in a Danish vessel which had called at Algoa Bay. The result of his representations to the authorities in Java, was the despatch from Batavia on February 19th, 1797, of a ship called the *Haasje*, laden with munitions of war and bound for Algoa Bay. Encountering stormy weather, whereby the vessel was much damaged, the skipper, De Freyn, was compelled to make for the nearest land and therefore ran the *Haasje* into Delagoa Bay. While there he endeavoured to communicate with the people of Graaff Reinet overland, but without success. Shortly after his arrival a whaler appeared upon the scene, flying an American flag. In a communicative moment, the skipper informed the captain of the whaler of his plans. This was unfortunate for De Freyn, as the only American feature of the new-comer was the flag, all else being British; in short, it was a British ship flying an American flag as a ruse. De Freyn and his people called in the assistance of the natives of the district, while the English were shortly reinforced by the arrival of a Portuguese ship. The result of a not very serious conflict was the capture of the *Haasje* with 22,800 lbs. of gunpowder, all of which was conveyed to Simon's Bay.

The second hostile movement against Algoa Bay from the sea took place during the subsidence of the Hottentot and Kaffir rising. As has already been mentioned, the *Rattlesnake* and *Camel* were stationed in the bay in connection with the service which was being rendered by the troops on land,



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and, presumably, they were not specially prepared for any action against an enemy at sea. On September 21st the captains of both ships, together with some other officers and men, were on shore and unable to rejoin their ships on account of the boisterous, dangerous surf. The senior officer remaining on the *Rattlesnake* was a Lieutenant Fothergill, on whom fell the whole responsibility of conducting the operations which eventually became necessary. Too much praise cannot be accorded to this brave officer for the presence of mind and courage he displayed in the terrible circumstances in which he found himself. The following is Lieutenant Fothergill's own account of what happened :—

“ His Majesty's Sloop *Rattlesnake*, Algoa Bay,  
“ Cape of Good Hope, 21 September, 1799.

“ SIR,

“ I have the pleasure to inform you that yesterday afternoon at about 4 o'clock (the wind then blowing in fresh from the E.S.E.) we perceived a strange sail to the Eastward, standing to the South West, for which the *Camel* made the signal to the shore. About sun-set she altered her course and bore down directly towards us with a Danish Jack flying at her Mizzen Peak, and we could soon after discern her tier of Ports, which together with the cut of her sails made us suspect her to be a Frigate. When it was nearly dark she handed her sails and dropp'd down upon us with her Broadside towards us until within three cables length of us, when she brought up (rather on our larboard Bow); soon afterwards the *Surprise* schooner who had been endeavouring to work out of the Bay having passed within hail of her ran under our stern and told us she was a French Frigate. I immediately made the private signal to the *Camel*, and fired a shot under the Frigate's stern which she did not return or take the least notice of. We at the same time cleared ship for action and got springs on both our Cables. Shortly the *Camel's* boat called on board and told us they had been alongside the strange ship, giving the same account of her as the schooner had before done. At eight, I sent a boat on board the *Camel* to let them know we were ready and to inquire whether they intended to fire. She returned with an answer that they were getting a spring on their cable and would hoist a light at the Mizzen Peak when they

were ready. At half past eight, the *Camel* not making any signal, and the Frigate appearing to drop towards us, I suspected that her intention was to board us; we therefore got our Broadside to bear on her and commenced our fire, which was soon seconded by the *Camel*, and very warmly returned by the enemy, who hoisted a French Ensign and appeared to direct the chief part of his fire at the *Camel*. About midnight the wind shifting to a fresh breeze from the N.W., the fire from the *Camel* being considerably slackened, and shortly after entirely silenced, the enemy got a spring on his cable and brought his Broadside to bear on the *Rattlesnake*, continuing to engage us with a smart fire (taking very little further notice of the *Camel* who within the last half hour of the action fired a few guns) until half past three in the morning, when he slipt his cable, made sail and ran off before the wind; she, however, remained in sight until 11 o'clock, at which time she was standing to the southward under her courses and Main Topsail, which as the wind was moderate makes me suppose that she was crippled in her masts . . . if the *Camel* had not unfortunately been disabled I have no doubt but we should have been able to give a good account of our Enemy. I am extremely happy in being able to add that our loss in men is very trifling.<sup>1</sup> The main mast, mizen mast, main top mast and bowsprit wounded with about eight shots between wind and water and some immaterial damage in the rigging is the only injury that the ship has sustained.

"I have, etc.,

"WM. FOTHERGILL."

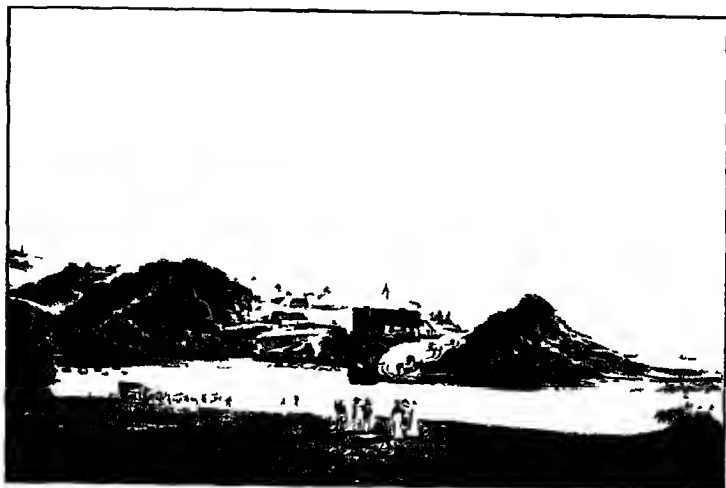
As soon as the booming of the ships' guns was heard at the camp, and made it clear that a hostile attack on the British ships was in progress, the whole of the troops were at once marched to the beach. Of heavy guns, there were at the camp only two long three-pounders and two nine-pounders. The latter were conveyed by waggon to the shore and as much show of strength and defence made as possible. It was supposed—as it was intended—that the Frenchmen had over-estimated the resistance it was possible to offer, and had, on that account, been induced to withdraw from the contest. A mes-

<sup>1</sup> Two killed, one severely wounded and a few slightly.

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IV. Town, who sent out a man-of-war of seventy-four guns in pursuit. Little, however, was effected. The hostile visitor was ascertained to be a French frigate of forty-eight guns, the *La Preneuse*, with 300 men on board. She made her way towards the coast of Brazil and fell in with another English vessel, by which she was chased into the Plate River, where she stranded, was abandoned, and finally set fire to by the English commander.

From one cause or another, therefore, the normal condition of the Eastern Province, from the earliest times up to the date referred to, was one of perpetual disturbance. The idea was accordingly entertained of establishing a permanent state of preparedness for all emergencies. A depot was required, which should be easily accessible from Cape Town, and from which it should be possible, without too long marches, to reach those parts of the country which were likely to need the presence of the troops.

The advantages of Algoa Bay as a landing-place and port for the East were realised at this early date, and General Vanderleur decided to maintain a permanent military post in that locality. A wooden blockhouse, capable of holding sixty men, had been constructed at considerable cost in Cape Town and sent round in pieces on board the *Camel*. It was erected on the low ground near the ford across the Baaken's River, on the east bank, at no great distance from the sea-shore. It was armed with two three-pounders and thus formed a protection to the chief supply of fresh water. Eventually it served as a prison and guardhouse. On the top of the hill immediately above this blockhouse, and overlooking the landing-place as well as commanding a fine view of the whole bay, a massive, square, stone redoubt was built. This structure is still in existence, and is one of the prominent features of Port Elizabeth of to-day. The walls are eighty feet long and nine feet high, except in those parts where the unevenness of the sloping ground necessitates their being higher. The wide arched entrance, with its double gates, is situated in the western wall, *i.e.*, in the wall facing away from the sea. On entering the fort, the powder magazine, capable of holding 2,000 lbs. of gunpowder, is seen on the right, while on the



THE BLOCKHOUSE BUILT IN ALCOY BAY BY GENERAL VANDERBILT IN 1799



ANOTHER VIEW OF THE SAME  
*From a Drawing by Samuel Daniell, engraved by himself*



left are the ruins of a small guardhouse; both structures, like the outside wall, massively constructed of large rough-hewn stones. Along the inside of the walls, earth and stones are banked up to within about three feet from the top, forming a path entirely round the inside of the fort, on which the sentries could pace and keep a look-out in every direction. The heavy armament consisted of eight twelve-pounders, and the full garrison of 350 men. General Vanderleur gave it the name of Fort Frederick in honour of the Duke of York. Fort Frederick is of special interest as being the very first piece of substantial and permanent building ever erected in the Eastern Province. Everything in Graaff Reinet up to this date was of a flimsy wattle and daub nature and has long since passed away. This old fort, therefore, especially deserves to be preserved as one of the most interesting historical landmarks of Cape Colony.

Under the protection of the fort, and for the greater convenience and efficiency of the isolated station, other buildings were shortly afterwards erected; *viz.*, extensive barracks for soldiers, magazines for military stores, a bake-house, smith's and carpenter's shops and others. These must be regarded as the modest beginning of Port Elizabeth.

On October 16th hostilities were announced to be at an end. The greater number of the troops returned to Cape Town and the commandos were disbanded. As recognition of the services rendered by the commandants, General Dundas presented each with a gun bearing the inscription: "Given by Major-General Dundas as a reward for services done to the British Government anno 1799".

Impressed with the idea that the termination of the late disturbance had been brought about by the pacifying influence of Mr. Maynier, General Dundas considered that perfect security and lasting peace would be established by entrusting to that gentleman the civil organisation of the district. Certain lines of action for his guidance were indicated, which, it was hoped, if judiciously carried out would render possible the peaceable co-existence of Boers, Hottentots and Kaffirs. As the hostility of the Hottentots was believed to be due to the harsh and unjust treatment they had received from the Boers while in their service, it was decided to institute in each drostdy, *i.e.*, the

CHAP. IV. headquarters of each district, a register of all Hottentots, men, women and children, in the service of the farmers, together with their terms of service, payment and other details. As many as possible of the runaway Hottentots were to be persuaded to return to their service under protection of the register. Certain Hottentot captains, with their adherents, were to have unoccupied lands assigned to them, and, in the first instance, to be supplied with such articles as they stood in essential need of, and thus to induce them to provide honestly for themselves. The Kaffirs were to be allowed to remain at their kraals on the banks of the Sunday's and Bosjesman's Rivers, provided they did not molest the Boers dwelling in their neighbourhood. The few disaffected Boers still residing with Gaika were to be induced to return to the Colony. A sum of money, amounting to 9,000 rix-dollars, which had been collected as fines from persons concerned in the rescue of Van Jaarsveld, was to be appropriated as a fund from which the farmers who had suffered most from the late depredations were to be assisted. There can be no doubt but that Mr. Maynier conscientiously exerted himself to the utmost in carrying out all the measures which seemed to him likely to bring about happier conditions of life. Unfortunately, the distrust and hatred in which he was held by those in whose interests he was appointed to act caused him to be regarded as a greater scourge than either the Hottentot or Kaffir, so that but little good came of his activities. As a reward for "his very meritorious public services," General Dundas created him a judge in the High Court of Justice. Further, by proclamation bearing date December 25th, 1799, he was appointed resident commissioner and superintendent of public affairs within the districts of Swellendam and Graaff Reinet, with power and authority to issue such orders and directions as may appear requisite for the good government of the said districts, and "all persons Civil and Military are hereby required severally and respectively to obey the said Maynier, whose orders shall be of the same validity or force as those issued by the Lieutenant-Governor himself". In pursuance of his instructions, Mr. Maynier, accompanied by a Dr. Somerville, journeyed into Kaffirland in November on a visit to Gaika. The object was to assure that chief of the desire of the British Government to remain at

peace with the great Kaffir nation, and also to induce him to expel from his country the notorious Buys and the other Boers who had taken refuge there. While making an outward show of his intention to maintain peaceable relations with the white inhabitants, Gaika took no steps to comply with the latter request. In fact, it eventually became known that he had been greatly tempted, probably at the instigation of Buys, to murder both commissioners.

In January, 1800, the acting governor returned to Cape Town and surrendered his authority in civil matters to Sir George Yonge, who had arrived as governor on December 9th previously.

The situation in which Mr. Maynier found himself on the departure of General Dundas was one of great responsibility and beset with many difficulties and dangers. The recent negotiations with the natives were more of the nature of a withdrawal from hostilities than a restoration of peace. Mr. Maynier was sensible of having to control a class of people who hated him personally and who were, probably, no better disposed to the Government which he represented. He had to deal with two different sets of Kaffirs, who were on bad terms with each other, and, besides this, to endeavour to appease the offended Hottentots. But a far more difficult task was that of combating the influence of those secret enemies, whose caution concealed them from view and thereby enabled them the more effectively to counteract his measures and triumph at his ill-success. A general survey of his administration of the district, under these trying conditions, shows him to have been actuated by the highest and most unselfish motives, and, without the stimulus of either fear or favour, to have steered a course indicated by the dictates of justice and humanity.

Many Hottentots were induced to re-enter the service of the farmers. The registration and Mr. Maynier's arbitration in cases of dispute worked satisfactorily. Relief to the poorest and most needy was afforded by the fund placed at his disposal, and no opportunity seems to have been lost of endeavouring to create happiness and contentment. With a view to furthering this end, he wrote privately—and in French for greater safety—to the governor, suggesting the expediency of liberating the Graaff Reinet prisoners then in the Castle at Cape Town.



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He pointed out that they had already received a term of punishment, and that if they were set free on condition of holding themselves responsible for the good behaviour of their friends at Graaff Reinet, it would be a gracious act on the part of the British Government and yet not be open to the charge of having neglected to take due notice of their rebellious conduct. All these good intentions, however, availed little in consequence of the malign influence of the all-powerful Buys and his associates in Kaffirland. Their emissaries operated throughout the district, intimidating the better disposed with threats of violence and murder. There was a conspiracy, in which Gaika was implicated, to attack and destroy the drostdy and to carry off the two commissioners into Kaffirland.<sup>1</sup> As a practical outcome of these machinations a party of Gaika's warriors invaded the Colony. When they arrived at the Baviaan's River they met with Cungwa and his people. That chief again, though probably in his own interest, did good service to the Colony by repelling the invaders and checking their further progress. The alarm was given and all the available military and armed civilians were soon in readiness. Mr. Maynier, assuming that friendly relations existed between himself and Gaika, sent a message to him acquainting him with the action of some of his people. The answer left no doubt as to the source of its inspiration. Gaika replied that the only ground on which he would make peace was the release of the prisoners in Cape Town. They were his allies, and until that demand was complied with, no present of whatever value would be received by him. Buys also was to be considered in the terms of peace. Christopher Botha, one of the fugitive rebels, was afterwards taken prisoner and carried to the drostdy at Graaff Reinet. He confessed that the intention was, with the aid of the Gaikas, to drive the English out of the country, and that no secret had been made of it. Further, the two commissioners were to have been conveyed into Kaffirland and to have been treated in the same manner as the English should treat the Dutch prisoners. In the event of success, Buys was to have been sovereign.

It is difficult to realise the conditions of life in the Eastern Province at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The region

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Somerville had been appointed assistant commissioner in consequence of Mr. Maynier's health breaking down in March, 1800.

at that date was a very remote and quite unknown part of the Empire. Little advantage in maintaining it as a dependency was apparent beyond, probably, that of acting as a barrier or buffer between the distant Kaffirs and the more settled parts of the Colony. The discovery of its potentialities, and such progress as had been made, were continually thwarted by the continued want of protection against the marauding blacks, the cost of which the small and scattered population as well as the vast extent of the country would have rendered most disproportionate to the advantage likely to be gained. As the country was dependent upon its own financial resources, the only policy which could be adopted towards the East was one of, practically, leaving it to itself in the hope that in the end things would right themselves.

In the meantime life and property were on very insecure tenure. The districts in the vicinity of the Kaffirs and Hot-tentots, in consequence of their lawlessness and want of control, had to be entirely abandoned by the Boers, a large proportion of whom were homeless and had wandered about from place to place since the last disturbance. The cattle of which they had been robbed had not been recovered; swarms of locusts had, shortly before, visited the district,—so that from one cause and another, the utmost wretchedness and poverty prevailed. In their ignorance and credulity, the Boers too willingly listened to the false reports which were disseminated amongst them by the evil disposed, and ascribed the source of all their misfortunes to those who were really acting in their interests. Any momentary good which Mr. Maynier effected in convincing them of their folly, was soon undone when they met with “some ill-intentioned person—some vagabond School-master or some Butcher’s worthless servant,” and everything done or said on the side of Government was looked upon with distrust.

Towards the end of May, 1801, the greatest uneasiness and alarm seized the minds thus disposed. A rumour had been circulated that, at the “opgaaf” which was to take place on the ensuing June 15th, in Graaff Reinet, the Government intended to seize the male inhabitants at an unguarded moment and press them into service in either the Army or Navy and that Mr. Maynier had been deputed to carry this into effect. As

CHAP. soon as this became known to Mr. Maynier, he took immediate  
IV. steps to reassure the people by persuading them of the falsity of the report and endeavouring to discover its origin. This, however, had little effect. On June 6th intelligence reached the village that all the inhabitants of Bruintjes Hooghte and surrounding parts had left their homes and had assembled in arms at Zwagershoek. A messenger was sent to them in order to learn the reason for this movement. The people were met hurrying towards the Tarka, with the intention of joining a similar band collecting under the commandant of that district—Johannes van der Walt. The answer to the question addressed to them was, that they were abandoning Bruintjes Hooghte as life there had become impossible on account of the Kaffirs. From an intimate friend, however, the messenger learnt in confidence that that statement was not true, but that the commotion was due entirely to the report referred to. The resident commissioner then issued a proclamation, which was widely circulated by the field-cornets and which was so effective, that on the appointed day, the inhabitants of Rhenosterberg, Sneeuwberg, Camdeboo, Sunday's River and Zwart Ruggens, fearlessly presented themselves at the opgaaf and renewed their oath of allegiance. But the people at the Tarka nursed their supposed grievance and seemed disappointed in finding no real excuse for venting their feelings against the hated Maynier. On July 3rd it was reported in Graaff Reinet that these people were marching in hostile array against the drostdy, with the intention of attacking and destroying it—further, that at the time of the report they were only eight hours distant. This was confirmed by letters which had been received from the leaders of the confederacy by the field-cornet, Schalk Willem Burger, and Carel Daniel Gerotz, the commandant of the Sneeuwberg—and which, on the day of the report, were shown to Mr. Maynier. He immediately called a meeting of the inhabitants of the village and asked their assistance in defending the place, adding that if matters came to the worst, he was prepared to do so with the few soldiers and armed Hottentots he had at his disposal. A deputation consisting of three influential inhabitants went forward with the idea of dissuading these deluded people from their wild project. The band consisted of about 400 men and were expecting to be rein-

forced—so they told the deputation—by a large number of Kaffirs under Buys and also by a body of farmers from Swellendam under Tjaart van der Walt. One of the leaders accompanied the deputation to Graaff Reinet, and by way of explanation of their conduct, he told Mr. Maynier that there was no hostile intention against the village, but that having heard the rumour with reference to pressing for the army and navy, they had come to learn the truth for themselves, but were afraid to do so unarmed, as in the event of its being true, they wished to have sufficient force to enable themselves to retreat and resist capture.

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Shortly afterwards, two other leaders, Rensburg and Piet Erasmus, summoned up sufficient courage to visit Mr. Maynier. They seemed satisfied that their fears were groundless and returned, ostensibly, to reassure the others. On the following day, 200 of these people appeared on the hill overlooking the town, now known as Magazine Hill. As their intentions seemed somewhat uncertain, the village force was called out and took up a position facing this hill and near the old church. This show of resistance probably dictated to them the prudence of accepting the further reassuring messages which were sent to them and then quietly dispersing. Instead, however, of disbanding and settling down to the peaceful pursuits of farming, they remained in arms and formed a camp in a remote and somewhat inaccessible region in the Stormberg Mountains, at no great distance from the site of the present town of Sterkstroom. In the official reports the place is referred to as "behind the Bamboes Mountain," and, according to the maps of that date, was beyond the boundary of the Colony. This procedure on the part of the Boers alarmed the Hottentots. They had heard that when the drostdy was destroyed and their friend Maynier driven forth, that they themselves would receive attention. Those, therefore, who had re-entered the service of the farmers, as well as many who had formed kraals of their own, fled to Graaff Reinet for protection. Among them were some who had been concerned in the recent murder of a farmer named Van Rooyen. In this critical state of affairs Mr. Maynier thought it wise to make every effort to maintain, as well as he was able, all the Hottentots who sought his protection, in order that, by exercising some control over

HAP. them in their then alarmed state, they might be prevented from  
IV. re-enacting their exploits of 1799.

All this reacted on the minds of the angry Boers, who viewed this protection as further encouragement to murder and robbery. Hence, on October 23rd, the armed body from the Bamboes Berg again appeared before Graaff Reinet, under the leadership of Hendrik Rensburg. It was demanded, under threat of immediate attack, that the Hottentots should be sent away, that the murderers of Van Rooyen and others should be delivered up and properly punished, and, in short, that the government of the district should be carried on in accordance with their own views. Mr. Maynier stood his ground. He told Rensburg that violence would be met by violence and that unless they retired he would give orders to fire upon them. This he was eventually compelled to do. The fire was returned and throughout the day the conflict continued. Towards night the enemy drew off and remained in arms at a distance. No one was hurt on either side. Having thus defied the Government and in remembrance of what had taken place two years previously, they could not but be certain that the consequences of their action would overtake them. In anticipation of this, a large number of the farmers who had abandoned their places remained assembled in arms. The greater part of the district was therefore again in such a state of disorder and rebellion that nothing short of the appearance of the troops from Fort Frederick was at all likely to produce any effect.

On November 27th a detachment of the 91st Light Infantry and a Rifle company with one six-pounder under the command of Major Sherlock, arrived in Graaff Reinet. On the 29th, Major Sherlock issued a proclamation, inviting all to make known to him their real grievances and offering a full pardon for past offences to those who would return to their allegiance. Copies of this were sent to the armed assembly, which was encamped near the village. The moment it was received, Piet Erasmus and J. A. Kruger went to the major and expressed their desire to take advantage of the terms offered. They stated that against the Government they had no grievance, but against the commissioner they had many and grievous complaints, all of which they were prepared to make on oath. The eager desire for the opportunity of bringing

forward allegations against Maynier was, most probably, at the bottom of this movement. This being satisfied, it was no difficult matter to persuade the malcontents to lay down their arms and retire peacefully to their homes. This Major Sherlock was successful in accomplishing—all the more so, perhaps, as he himself seems to have shared in the general dislike of the commissioner, whom, at times, he treated with the scantiest courtesy. In reporting to the governor on the state of Graaff Reinet as he found it on his arrival, Major Sherlock did an injustice to Mr. Maynier in ascribing to him the cause of the garrison having been without bread for four days, and the congregated Hottentots having been so starved and fatigued that his own nephew, Van Reenen, who had been appointed to take command of them, had on that account resigned the position. Also other circumstances, which could be easily accounted for by the scarcity of food in general and the slender resources of Graaff Reinet at the best of times, together with the very exceptional conditions which the late disturbance had brought about. Before matters had reached this stage, however, other influences had been at work in opposition to the unhappy commissioner. Unknown to him, some prominent persons in the West, who were most loyally disposed to the British Government, had made representations on behalf of the complaining Boers. In consequence of this, evidence had been collected with a view to formulating charges against him. In December he received instructions to go to Cape Town for a purpose not stated. Without any suspicion of what was transpiring, he went, and on his arrival was thunderstruck to find that he was regarded as little better than the worst of criminals. He found rumour busy to the effect that he had fled from Graaff Reinet and that he was accused of treason, theft and murder. He was told that the governor refused to see him, that a commission had been appointed to inquire into his conduct, and that he was suspended from all his public offices—including the judgeship. An indictment was drawn up, on the face of which the malice and deliberate intention of perverting the truth were so apparent that it is a matter of surprise it received any serious consideration. In fact, in the report of the investigation it was stated "that some of the Evidences are such as to merit the most serious reprehension". Among the

CHAP. many charges were: speculation in various instances; suppression of truth in his reports; levying a game tax of his own; IV. dissuading the Hottentots from entering the British service; "delivering into the hand of the Boers a number of Hottentots, who had fled to him for protection, fifteen of whom are said to have been immediately murdered by the forementioned Boers"; and his (Maynier's) murder of the old farmer Naude.<sup>1</sup> The commission of inquiry consisted of Lieutenant-Colonel Dickens and Messrs. Acheson Maxwell and Clement Matthiessen. As a result of the investigation, Mr. A. Barnard, the Colonial Secretary, in writing to the president and members of the Court of Justice, said "that after a diligent and impartial investigation of the Commissioners not any part of the accusation before-mentioned appears to them to be founded in truth, on the contrary it appears from their report that Mr. Maynier during his administration of the District of Graaff Reinet had to the best of his judgment and ability discharged the duties of his office, having shown himself a faithful servant to Government, conducting himself upon every occasion as an upright and honest man".<sup>2</sup> As a compensation for his losses and expenses, he was awarded £1,000 by General Dundas.

This removal of the resident commissioner necessitated the re-instatement of Mr. Bressler as the controlling civil authority of the district. A new element of difficulty and perplexity now presented itself, namely, that of dealing with the large number of Hottentots, whom force of circumstances had driven to the village of Graaff Reinet as well as with those who, uncertain as to whether they would join the Kaffirs or the white inhabitants, were leading a vagabond existence in other parts of the huge district. It is true they were nominally quiet and kept in some sort of order, yet under the pretence of the chase they wandered about armed and too often misused the privilege the Government had accorded them of allowing them to possess gunpowder.

At the beginning of 1801, a missionary appeared in Graaff Reinet who enthusiastically commenced the work of religious

<sup>1</sup> Naude and his wife were barbarously murdered on November 6th, by some unknown hand, on their farm about twelve miles from Graaff Reinet.

<sup>2</sup> For Mr. Maynier's able defence, see p. 283, vol. iv., of *Records of Cape Colony*.

instruction among the refugee Hottentots. This seemed likely to bring about the most satisfactory control and to solve the problem with which the Government found itself confronted. The idea was then conceived of collecting together as many others as possible and forming a location at some distance from the village under the superintendence of the missionary.

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With an account of this man begins a thread in the historical texture of the Eastern Province, which, as time went on, became more predominant and developed into one of the most important features of the fabric, giving to it its sombre and melancholy hue. In the pattern, gradually unfolded, are seen the systematic and *legalised* robbery by Kaffirs, Hottentot rebellion, the abandonment of the Colony by hundreds of its worthy Dutch inhabitants, the grossest misrepresentation which cut off the sympathy of their kinsfolk in their native land from the suffering British Colonists, and a pseudo-philanthropy which had no ears but for the supposed virtues of the black and vices of the white. Had a certain section of the missionary element never appeared in Cape Colony, the history of the East might have been a very different and happier one.

Dr. Johannes Theodosius Vanderkemp, son of a Dutch minister of the Lutheran Church, was born at Rotterdam in 1748. He studied natural philosophy at the University of Leyden, where his abilities attracted very considerable attention. He seems, however, to have cut short his philosophical studies and to have entered the army. Serving for sixteen years and "living a slave to vice and ungodliness,"<sup>1</sup> he was constrained to terminate his military career prematurely—according to Lichtenstein<sup>2</sup>—on account of having contracted a marriage beneath him, but, according to Dr. Philip, on account of a personal misunderstanding with the Prince of Orange.<sup>3</sup> He then took up the study of physic at the University of Edinburgh, where, in two years, he graduated as M.D., and while carrying on these medical studies, found time to write his *Parmenides*, a Latin work on cosmology. Returning to Holland he practised as a physician at Heidelberg and finally retired to Dort. On June 27th, 1791, a terrible domestic disaster overtook him. While sailing in a small boat on the river Maese, in company

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Lond. Miss. Soc.*, vol. i., p. 483.

<sup>2</sup> *Travels*, vol. i., p. 235.

<sup>3</sup> *Researches*, vol. i., p. 63.



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with his wife and daughter, a violent storm suddenly arose and upset the boat; they were drowned before his eyes, while he himself, clinging to the upset boat, was carried down by the stream and with considerable difficulty rescued from his perilous position by some boatmen. This calamity brought about a complete change in his mind. He forsook medicine, and with great ardour took to theology and Biblical and Oriental languages. He wrote several books, which, in consequence of their mystical tone and terrifying prolixity, appealed to but few. The missionary enterprise and enthusiasm of the end of the eighteenth century fired Vanderkemp with the desire of taking up work of that nature. In 1797 he offered himself to the London Missionary Society, which had been founded two years previously. He was accepted and appointed to work in Kaffirland. In company with three other missionaries, *viz.*, Kircherer, Edwards and Edmonds, he sailed from Spithead on December 23rd, 1798, in the convict ship *Hillsborough* bound for Botany Bay, and arrived in Cape Town on March 31st, 1799. His mission to Kaffirland was not a success, though he remained in the country for over a year. Gaika did not seem to be able to understand Vanderkemp's motives and looked upon him with suspicion. It is difficult to estimate how far the chief was influenced by Buys in this matter, that Boer usually acting as interpreter between the chief and missionary. In December, Vanderkemp finally abandoned Kaffirland and went to Graaff Reinet with the idea of turning his attention to the Hottentots. He arrived there at the time when the village was becoming the asylum of the alarmed Hottentots, and hence by endeavouring to occupy their minds with matters other than their distressed condition, he contributed largely to the maintenance of good order. In this he was assisted by two other missionaries, who, shortly before, had also been sent out by the London Missionary Society, namely, Messrs. Read and Vanderlingen. In order to carry out the project of appropriating to the Hottentots some land for their own exclusive use, the Government, on November 27th, 1801, instructed Mr. Bressler to select some unoccupied and suitable site. The abandoned farm of Theunis Botha—one of those concerned in the Van Jaarsveld affair, and who at the date referred to was still in prison—was the place eventually chosen. It is described as situated between the

places of Thomas Ignatius Ferreira and the Widow Scheepers, that is, between the present Cradock Place, near Port Elizabeth, and Uitenhage. This may seem, at first sight, rather vague, but it must be remembered that the farms or loan places (Leenings-Plaatzen) were very large and indefinite in their boundaries, so that the whole country between Uitenhage and the coast forming only three farms was nothing remarkable in those days. This location, which shortly afterwards received the name of Bethelsdorp, is about four miles from Redhouse Station, on the Port Elizabeth and Uitenhage line.

As an incentive to industry and to enable them to make a start, the Hottentots were to be provided, in the first instance, with rice, seed-wheat and agricultural implements. In March, 1802, a motley band of some hundreds of Hottentots left Graaff Reinet under the leadership of the two missionaries, Vanderkemp and Read, and after a journey of over 160 miles, reached their new home. The greater number of men, however, deserted while on the march, so that the population on arrival at their destination consisted chiefly of women and children. The general principles on the basis of which Dr. Vanderkemp proposed to rule the "Institution" are enunciated in a letter to General Dundas, dated February 11th, 1801. The two following sections (out of thirteen) express the leading ideas:—

"2. The chief object and aim of the missionaries under whose direction this settlement shall be established ought to be to promote the knowledge of Christ and the practice of real piety, both by instruction and example, among the Hottentots and other heathen, who shall be admitted and formed into a regular society; and in the second place, the temporal happiness and usefulness of this society, with respect to the country at large.

"6. As we are of opinion that the rule laid down by Paul 'that if any would not work, neither should he eat,' ought to be strictly observed in every Christian society, our intention is to discourage idleness and laziness; and to have the individuals of our institution, as much as circumstances shall admit, employed in different useful occupations, for the cultivation of their rational faculties, or exercise of the body, as means of subsistence, and of promoting the welfare of this society, and the colony at large."

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To give effect to all these plausible and meritorious intentions, Dr. Vanderkemp himself was singularly unfitted. His religious enthusiasm and great learning seem to have incapacitated him for dealing in a common-sense manner with the ordinary concerns of life; and when it is realised that his peculiar situation necessitated his becoming a semi-political agent—an intermediary between the Hottentots and the Government—it is not surprising that the institution was a failure and that continued friction with the civil authorities resulted from his endeavours. He found it almost impossible to enforce the “rule laid down by Paul,” for some of the people would at times seek temporary employment with the farmers, while “others chose to lie in the bushes, and live upon the roots in the field, rather than be subject to the discipline of a civilised life. Laziness is the most prevalent evil among our people, which exposes them to the greatest distresses. The inconsistency of the Hottentots in their matrimonial connections subjects us to great irregularities.”<sup>1</sup>

In order the more completely to identify themselves with their converts, and to obviate all appearance of arrogance and superiority over them, these missionaries felt it expedient to become allied to them by marriage. Hence we read that “Brother Read was married to a young Hottentot woman by Brother Vanderkemp,” and in 1807 Brother Read returned the compliment by marrying Brother Vanderkemp to a young Madagascar slave of sixteen years of age.

The moral and intellectual advantages arising from the dignity of honest toil, the satisfaction of duty fulfilled and the striving after lofty ideals had no great attraction for the wandering and cattle-lifting Hottentots. They were quite contented to be allowed to continue to wander and lift cattle. By way, therefore, of persuading these roving bands to submit to the control of Dr. Vanderkemp’s institution, as well as to recover from them some of the ill-gotten stock, a commando of 200 burghers from the district of Swellendam was ordered to take the field under Commandant Van der Walt. Of this number only eighty-eight obeyed the summons. In February, 1802, this small band attacked the Hottentots kraaled between the Sunday’s and Bushman’s Rivers, capturing 200 cattle and five

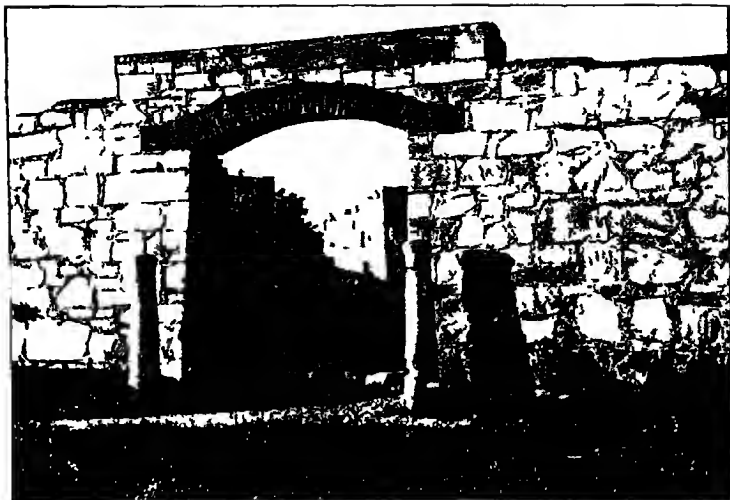
<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Lond. Miss. Soc.*, vol. i., p. 503.

horses. Van der Walt's son was killed while assisting to effect this. The burgher force, in returning to their camp, which had been formed in the Winterhoek, was delayed on the bank of the Sunday's River in consequence of the river being in flood. The enemy, watching their opportunity, determined to recover what had been taken from them and recommenced the attack. The contest continued for a day and a half, during which time three Hottentots were killed. Klaas Stuurman, the leader, sent a messenger to Van der Walt to bargain for peace—and the recovered cattle. The commandant agreed to restore what had been recaptured on condition that the Hottentots promised to refrain from further pillage upon the farmers. This was apparently agreed to. In about an hour, however, the commando was again attacked, but the river having become passable, they retreated hurriedly to their camp and without any further show of resistance hastened back to their homes. It is somewhat surprising that the Government should so soon have forgotten the lesson which the experience of a few years previously must have inculcated. The bees were buzzing unpleasantly, it is true, but to have assailed the hive—if idle Hottentots may be compared with so industrious a community—without calculating the probability of being stung is scarcely a prudent measure. This feeble effort, ending in ignominious failure, again brought the combined Hottentots and Kaffirs against the Colony with a repetition of all the horrors of 1799. The poverty of the Boers was great, many being so short of food that rice had to be sent to Algoa Bay to avert actual starvation, yet all farming concerns had to be laid aside and the bread-winners compelled to go forth on the interminable commando. On May 7th General Dundas issued a proclamation "to appoint and direct an armed assemblage of the farmers of the said district (Graaff Reinet) to take place on the 1st of June next under the orders of Major Francis Sherlock, commanding a detachment of His Majesty's troops in that district in order to co-operate under his order and directions, with the people of Swellendam, who have also been required to assist under the direction of their Landdrost and the Veld Commandant Van der Walt in order to repress effectually these hordes of savages, thereby restoring to the peaceable inhabitants the blessings of tranquillity".

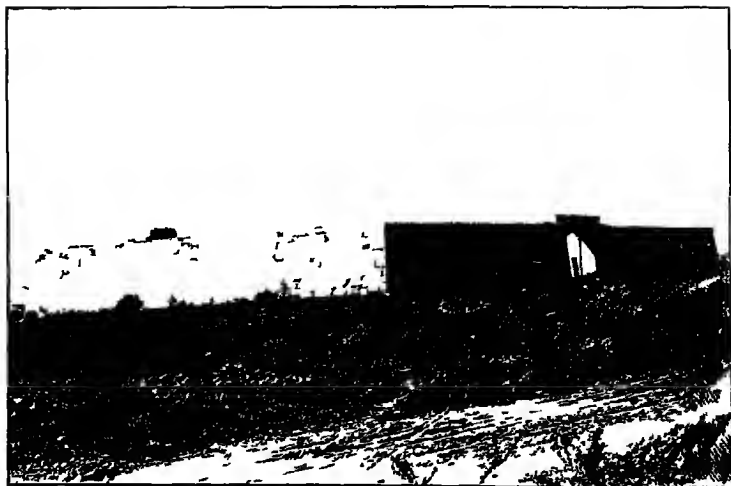
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When the Hottentots came to know that a larger movement against them was in progress, Klaas Stuurman visited Dr. Vanderkemp with a view of ascertaining on what conditions the impending trouble might be averted. The doctor, having communicated with Cape Town, was in due course instructed by General Dundas to state that the terms of peace were: that all stolen cattle still alive, as well as all arms and ammunition, were to be delivered up to the officer in command of Fort Frederick; that none would be molested on account of past offences, except the actual murderers of the Naudes and Van Rooyens; and that all men were to enlist in the Hottentot corps, or, under guarantee of good treatment, to take service with the Boers, or to repair to Dr. Vanderkemp's institution. The terms, however, were not considered sufficiently attractive by the marauders, who preferred therefore to take the risks of the intended attack. In June, 1802, the combined burgher force took the field and for about two months skirmished in the bushy country in the vicinity of the Sunday's River; 13,100 head of cattle were recaptured and about 230 Hottentots were killed. On the side of the Boers, among a few others, the brave and universally respected Tjaart van der Walt received his death-wound by a Hottentot bullet. These results as well as the whole conduct of the operations form a striking refutation of the charges of cowardice and timidity which were levelled at these people by the military authorities in 1799; and further demonstrated how effectively the mobile Boer was able to deal with the natives when allowed to carry on his warfare in his own way—unhampered by unwieldy military regulations, movements and procedure. P. R. Botha assumed command on the death of Van der Walt, though he did not exercise the same great influence or inspire the same confidence. The burgher force shortly afterwards withdrew from the country and returned to their homes. But the Hottentots were not rendered any the more peaceable by these efforts. They again sought the alliance and assistance of the Kaffirs, preparatory to more extended operations, and thus again the Colony was threatened with widespread devastation. Dr. Vanderkemp, seeing the danger which surrounded his mission station, moved all his people for protection to Fort Frederick. Before long, the more southern part of the Colony,





ENTRANCE TO FORT FREDERICK



*Photo G. O. Smith, Esq*

GENERAL VIEW OF FORT FREDERICK.

as far west as Plettenberg's Bay and George, was again overrun by Kaffirs and Hottentots; and again General Dundas with Mr. Maynier went East, armed with the worn-out weapon of conciliation and forgiveness for past offences. It was more than ever necessary that, at that time, the Colony should present an appearance of quietness and order, as negotiations were in progress in Europe for the possession of the Cape to be transferred to the Batavian Republic. As the "sop in the pan" policy of General Dundas and Mr. Maynier failed, and the troops at the various posts were preparing to return to England, there was no course open but again to drag the poor farmers from their homes to go on commando. Accordingly the burghers were ordered to assemble in arms at Wolfefontein, about half-way between Fort Frederick and Graaff Reinet, on December 20. Their services on this occasion, however, were not required, for the thieves had been divided against themselves; the Kaffirs quarrelled with the Hottentots over the stolen property and each seemed to be indisposed to sustain an attack and therefore promised to behave as the commandant of the force dictated to them. The commando then disbanded.

On March 27th, 1802, in settlement of the European troubles, a definitive treaty of peace between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the French Republic was signed and ratified at Amiens in France. In pursuance of which General Dundas was directed "to deliver the Settlement of the Cape of Good Hope with the Fortifications thereof, to such person as shall be authorised to receive the same on the part of the Batavian Republic; the transfer to take place within three months after the ratification of the said treaty". To carry this into effect, Mr. Jacob de Mist, LL.D., was appointed to go to Cape Town as commissary-general, to act on behalf of the Batavian Republic, and with him went the new governor, Lieutenant-General Jan Willem Janssens. These gentlemen arrived in Cape Town on December 23rd. It had been arranged and agreed that the formal restitution was to take place on December 31st, and the Batavian flag hoisted on the Castle on January 1st, 1803. Almost at the last moment, however, the whole state of affairs completely changed, and for a time it seemed as if the harmony which had prevailed was to be replaced by



CHAP. a conflict of a most serious character. In quite a theatrical  
IV. manner the change took place. The English and Dutch commanders were dining together in the happiest frame of mind within a few hours of the intended change of government, when an English officer, who had just arrived from England, suddenly appeared bearing a despatch from Lord Hobart, Secretary of State for the Colonies. It was to the effect that the British officers were not to relinquish their hold upon the Colony but to delay the transference already arranged. Most difficult and delicate relations were created between the authorities of the two nations and continued until February 19th, when final orders for the evacuation were received. On Sunday, February 20th, General Dundas issued a proclamation absolving all the inhabitants from their oath of allegiance to his Britannic Majesty; and on March 4th, with his staff and the remainder of the army and fleet, General Dundas sailed away from South Africa, leaving Cape Colony once more a dependency of the Netherlands.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE EASTERN PROVINCE UNDER BATAVIAN RULE.

DURING the seven years of British rule, some advance towards the establishment of order in the eastern frontier districts had been made. The spirit of Jacobinism in its worst form had been almost entirely eliminated, and the deluded Graaff Reiniet Boer impressed with a more moderate estimate of his power and importance. The most serious problem, however, namely, that of dealing effectually with the invading and marauding native, was as far from solution as ever. In consequence of the unsuccessful demonstrations which had been made against the Kaffirs, they felt themselves sufficiently powerful to maintain their occupation of territory which they acknowledged to be part of the Colony, and in which, aware of the oft-renewed treaties, they knew themselves to be intruders. This was further complicated by the old enmity which still existed between the powerful Gaika on the east of the Fish River and the almost equally powerful Ndhlabi, supported by the renegade chiefs, taking refuge on the west. Without a larger military force than had hitherto been available, it was impossible to render the Zuurveld other than a constant source of disturbance and danger. Depredations, in a large measure, had ceased, but probably only because there was scarcely anything left to seize. The Hottentot question had also to be reckoned with. There was a disposition on the part of these people to combine under the leaders Klaas Stuurman and Boesak, which boded no good for future tranquillity. Those under Dr. Vanderkemp had, during the late disturbances, removed to Fort Frederick for protection; but this they failed to receive in consequence of the fort being abandoned by the British soldiers as one of the preliminaries of the restoration of the Colony to the Dutch. The representatives of the Batavian Government, therefore, on assuming authority, found no part

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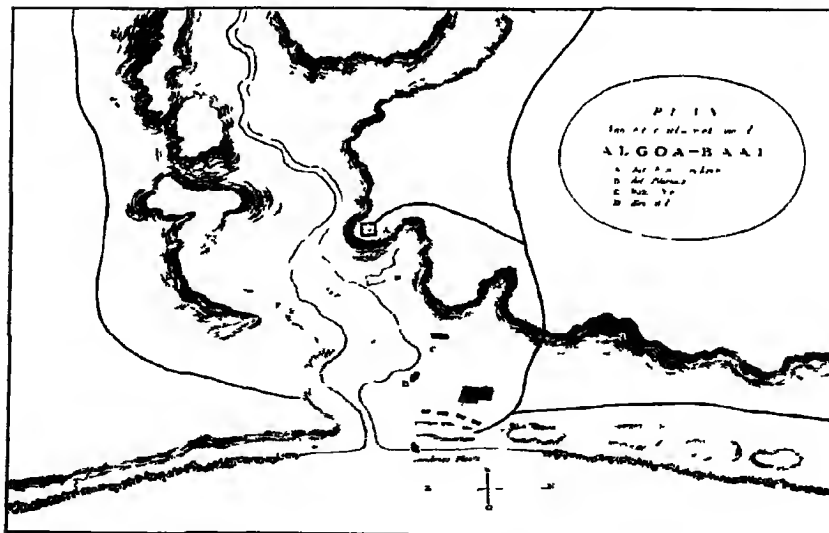
of their administration requiring such prompt and careful attention as the affairs of the East. This necessity was further impressed upon the new governor by the arrival in Cape Town of a deputation of Eastern colonists, petitioning him to visit the distant frontier in order to see for himself the conditions under which the people were living. That sincere desire and whole-hearted determination to promote the welfare of the country, which characterised every part of his short-lived administration, induced General Janssens to set out on this important business with little delay. On April 3rd, little more than a month after he had been installed as governor by the commissary-general, De Mist, he left Cape Town and journeyed overland to Fort Frederick. Arriving there on May 8th, he found, awaiting him, a detachment of the Waldeck regiment under the command of Major Von Gilten, which had been despatched thither by sea. The first matter which presented itself for consideration was the re-location of Dr. Vanderkemp and his Hottentot followers. The prospect of settling down any number of these people by useful employment and efficient control was one which appealed to General Janssens no less than it had done to General Dundas. Under some well-defined regulations,<sup>1</sup> drawn up with a view of establishing cordial relationships between the Colonists and Mission Hottentots, a grant of land was made for the permanent use of the missionary institution and the name of Bethelsdorp officially sanctioned. Investigations were made into mutual grievances, and many of the Hottentots were found to have had good reason for bringing complaints of ill-treatment against their Boer masters. Jan Arend Rens and Thomas Ignatius Ferreira of Papenkuilsfontein (Cradock Place) in particular were held in especial detestation, not only by the Hottentots but also by many of the Boers themselves. Ferreira, who had installed himself as a kind of unofficial commandant in the empty Fort Frederick, was accused of horribly ill-treating some Kaffir and Hottentot prisoners captured in the late war, though it was found difficult to prove much against him. The governor thought it advisable, however, to remove both of these men from the district. Ferreira, with his two sons, Stephen and Henry,

<sup>1</sup> For Janssens' letter to Vanderkemp, containing these, see Appendix at end of this chapter.





INTERIOR OF FORT FRIEDRICH  
Powder Magazine on the left, notice steps leading up to Sentries' Walk



PLAN OF ALGOA BAY IN 1802.  
From Albert's "Kaffirs of South Africa"

was sent to Swellendam and Rens to Stellenbosch.<sup>1</sup> As soon as possible after his arrival at Algoa Bay, General Janssens despatched messengers to the native chiefs, with whom he wished to hold conferences of peace. Klaas Stuurman, encamped on the Sunday's River with a number of Hottentots who acknowledged him as their chief, on being assured that every friendliness was entertained towards him, overcame his reluctance and visited the governor at the fort. Boesak could not be persuaded to take so bold a step. Stuurman was very cautious in the answers he gave with reference to the number of his followers and the complaints the Hottentots had against the Colonists. It transpired that whatever friendly relations had existed between them and the Kaffirs during the combination to rob and despoil the farmers, all such had ceased and that they themselves were suffering much from the Kaffirs

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<sup>1</sup> The tale Barrow tells of the brutality of Ferreira is, in all probability, a gross exaggeration. He says (p. 383, vol. i., 1806 edition) that while Ferreira was at the fort, a Kaffir with a Hottentot guide took an ox for presentation to the self-appointed commandant as a token of friendship and peace. Both men were seized and, actuated either by a vindictive desire for revenge or by a diabolical hatred towards the coloured race, the Kaffir was broiled alive, while the Hottentot, having first been bound to a tree, had a piece of flesh cut out of his thigh which he was compelled to eat, and was then liberated. It would be interesting to learn how the distinguished traveller came to know of this, for the date at which it was supposed to have happened was just *after* he had left the Colony. Barrow seems too often to have allowed his personal dislike for the Dutch to have obtained the mastery over his otherwise sound judgment and discretion, and to have given too ready credence to any tale which lent support to his prejudiced opinion. Colonel Collins, who, in 1808, made an extended tour of observation through the Colony with a view to investigating, on behalf of the Government, the relations which existed between the farmers and the various tribes, thus speaks, in his report dated May 30th, 1808, of Mr. Barrow and his writings on African matters: "A late traveller [Barrow] who, from some unaccountable cause, seems to have exerted all his ingenuity to exhibit the African farmers in their most unfavourable point of view, and whose representations of their treatment of the aborigines having been conveyed through the medium of eloquent declamation and specious philanthropy, seem to have been implicitly received and regarded as incontrovertible, although his statements respecting them are extremely incorrect, as I have known from many particulars that have fallen under my observation, . . . in almost everything that respects the farmers, and particularly in what relates to the manner in which they treat their servants, I think he has shown the most unjustifiable prejudice, as I invariably observed them to behave in the kindest manner to the Hottentots, who show them an attachment that was strongly marked by some circumstances that occurred on my late journey, an attachment not a little extraordinary, as in the service of the farmers on the borders of the Colony they are exposed to suffer, not only the severest hardships from excessive fatigue and inclemency of weather, but also the most imminent dangers from the Bojesmen and beasts of prey".

CHAP. V. and had barely enough to subsist upon. He was told that the Hottentots could not be suffered to live as a company of vagabonds, but that they must endeavour to gain their livelihood by honest industry. The desire was expressed to live in peace with the Christians and under guarantee of good treatment to enter again into the service of the Boers or to enlist in the Hottentot corps. Stuurman asked that, as a permanent location, a grant of land on the Gamtoos River might be made to him and his followers. He would not hear of the governor's suggestion that that grant should be made nearer to Cape Town where Government protection might be more effectual. Before taking leave of Stuurman, General Janssens presented him with a brass gorget—an ornamental breastplate—on which was inscribed :—

“CAPITEYN KLAAS STUURMAN  
VREEDE EN VRIENDSCHAAP  
MET DE BATAAVISCHE REPUBLIEK  
DEN ISTE MAART 1803”.

Some months afterwards the request for land was complied with, and Captain Alberti, next in command to Major Von Gilten, at Fort Frederick, was instructed to select a suitable domain. Klaas Stuurman, however, never occupied it, for while the subject was under consideration, he was, in November, 1803, accidentally killed by the bursting of his gun while hunting buffaloes.<sup>1</sup> His brother David became the occupier. Boesak and his people gradually settled down, some as servants on the farms and others at Bethelsdorp. From this time onward, the Hottentots gave no serious trouble until they took a prominent part against the Colony in the great rebellion of 1851.

Before the return of the messengers who had been sent to the rebel Kaffir chiefs, namely, those who were at enmity with Gaika and were residing on the west of the Fish River, envoys from Jalousa and Ndhambi arrived at Fort Frederick. They gave the governor to understand that the Kaffirs were very

<sup>1</sup> “Klaas had not long taken possession of his new abode when he was killed on a hunting party by his brother David, as the latter states, by accident, but as is strongly suspected, even by some Hottentots, intentionally; a crime well worthy of a man whose first master died by poison, a few days after this monster had declared publicly that he would not permit him long to live.” (Col. Collins in the account of his tour through the East in 1809.)

tired of the disturbed and uncertain state in which they were living and expressed a desire for peace, but felt the impossibility of obtaining it without the intervention of some higher authority. The governor's envoys soon returned, bringing the same account. They stated further that the chiefs were willing to confer with the governor, but that as they were afraid to go to Algoa Bay they hoped he would meet them in five days' time at the Sunday's River. Accordingly, on May 20th, a move from the Fort was made for this purpose. The escort consisted of fifty-six men of the Waldeck regiment, nine dragoons and thirty others. At the Coega the party was met by about a hundred of the Dutch inhabitants. They fired a salute of welcome in testimony of their joy at the Colony passing back to its original possessors and renewed their oath of allegiance to the Batavian Government; albeit many of them had probably done their best to overthrow the Company's rule and to express satisfaction at the British occupation. General Janssens spoke to them in much the same terms as General Craig had done some years before. He assured them of his paternal care, and pointed out that many of their misfortunes had arisen from their own misconduct and the intrigues of some among them who had led them astray. His exhortations were favourably received and assurances given of a determination to do all they could to maintain peace and order. These men joined the governor's procession and the whole moved to the west bank of the Sunday's River, where a combined camp was formed. Two days elapsed before Ndhlabi, Cungwa, Tzatzoe and some minor chiefs presented themselves, and then they were so timid and distrustful that they could not be persuaded to cross the river to the governor's camp. On the 24th the conference began. The governor, with a small retinue, crossed the river to meet them, but on account of the suspicion the chiefs entertained that all this had something to do with an attempt to force them into Gaika's power, they showed a disposition to keep at a distance and at times to seek refuge in the neighbouring thickets. Having in a measure eased their minds in this respect, the governor returned to his camp and commenced the negotiations. The Kaffirs were very wary in the answers they gave, and, as is the custom with these people, every point had to be talked over at



CHAP. length, each one present having a right to express an opinion.  
V. The conference thus lasted three days. All the time they evinced an uneasiness which gradually developed into an uncontrollable impatience to move from the presence of the white man. Even the prospect of the presents, which they knew they were to receive, could not induce some of them to endure the ordeal longer. At the end, only two of the minor chiefs remained—probably at the command of those who fled—and by these presents were sent to the others. From the parley which had taken place, it was gathered that they did not know what had been their motive in urging on the late war; certain of the colonists, particularly Ferreira, had behaved very badly to them. But their chief enemy was Gaika, whom they believed to be entirely under the influence of Conraad Buys. Buys was really at the bottom of all the trouble between them; and they were convinced that until he was removed from Kaffirland, no lasting peace could be brought about. It transpired that they themselves were meditating an attack upon Gaika at no distant date. The governor offered to act as mediator between them and their lawful chief; the offer, however, was not received with enthusiasm. Some were willing to make their submission provided they could be guaranteed protection against his tyranny and cruelty. Ndhlabi, on the other hand, unconditionally refused to have anything to do with his nephew, whom, he said, he had brought up and knew to be a rascal. Gaika, as has already been shown, had ample reason for reciprocating this sentiment. On conditions of peace between themselves and the Europeans, it was agreed that the past should be forgotten; that all slaves and deserters among the Kaffirs should be sent back to the Colony and all Kaffir children in the Colony sent forth to Kaffirland. With reference to the Fish River being regarded as the boundary of the Colony and their own withdrawal to the east of it, they could make no promise. This depended upon the result of the intended attack upon Gaika; should they be successful they would observe that boundary. To the proposal that no Colonist should visit Kaffirland and no Kaffir to go into the Colony, they could not agree. It would not be peace, they argued, if they did not visit each other now and again as friends; the Colonists were rich, and what was the use of rich

friends if one did not make use of them? It was this principle, carried into systematic practice, which had been the cause of so much trouble. A "friendly" Kaffir, with, possibly, an associate or two, would squat down near a homestead and beg from the farmer. His importunities complied with, he retired to a distance to enjoy what he had obtained and then returned for more. In many cases the farmers did not refuse for fear of offending them and bringing upon themselves a train of disasters. In other cases, the limits of the patience of an irate Boer might soon be exceeded and the prayer for bread might be answered by the sjambok,—thus, in all probability, laying the foundation for a charge of cruelty and oppression to the natives. The conference having terminated, the governor returned to Algoa Bay on May 27th. As a step towards reducing to a minimum the risk of conflict between the colonists and natives, an ordinance was published forbidding the farmers, from the ensuing June 1st, to take any Kaffirs into their employ. All those then in their service were to be sent away, except in cases where a Kaffir had been employed for over a year and wished to remain. Having so far established a satisfactory understanding with the rebel chiefs, the same with regard to Gaika had yet to be accomplished. On June 2nd, General Janssens set out for Kaffirland with this object in view. Travelling almost due north, he crossed the Sunday's and Bushman's Rivers and reached the vicinity of Commadagga (then called Quammedakka), thence to the Great Fish River, where he arrived on June 10th. He there awaited the messengers, who had been sent on previously to acquaint Gaika of the proposed visit. These arrived on the 14th and shortly afterwards were followed by a deputation from the chief himself. The party was under the leadership of Buys and consisted of twelve Kaffirs, four of whom were Gaika's confidential advisers, and also some English and Dutch deserters who were handed over as prisoners. A message was brought from Gaika asking the governor to proceed some days' journey nearer to his place, as, aware of the intention of the rebel chiefs to attack him, he was afraid to go so far away. The governor exhorted Buys to use his influence with Gaika for peace, and having pointed out to him the evil his continued sojourn in Kaffirland was producing, asked him to return to the Colony.

CHAP. V. To both these requests Buys promised to accede. The journey was then further continued for six days in a north-easterly<sup>1</sup> direction to the Kat River, a spot somewhere below the site on which Fort Beaufort now stands. As soon as Gaika knew of the governor's near approach, he despatched to him a messenger, asking that an officer and military escort might be sent to conduct him to the camp, and, with a filial piety worthy of a more civilised monarch, also requested that a waggon might be sent to convey his corpulent mother, the wife of Buys, to the same place, in order that she might be privileged to enjoy the pleasures likely to attend such a conference. General Janssens willingly complied with what was asked. Accompanied by his mother, two wives and a considerable retinue, consisting of the military escort and a number of his own warriors armed with shields and assegais, Gaika, on horseback but without saddle, drew near to the governor's camp. Both Barrow and Lichtenstein speak in the most eulogistic terms of the personality of this chief. Tall and powerfully built, his whole demeanour bespoke the king. His countenance is described as expressive of the utmost benevolence and self-confidence. His benevolence, however, regarded in the light of subsequent history, does not seem to have found a wider field for its operation than his countenance.

The most cordial relations were soon established between Gaika and his European visitors. The chief, with his ladies, accepted the invitation to dinner at the governor's table. Though amused and surprised at the manner of serving up the food and the use of knives and forks, he was much gratified by all he saw and tasted. This was expressed every now and again by handing portions of the food over his shoulder to the open-eyed—and probably open-mouthed—attendants who were standing behind him. He approved of the wine, though he did not take much. The wives, on the other hand, displayed more enthusiasm in this respect and, in the end, so the traveller tells us, showed that they had liked it rather too well. European costume, also, found very considerable favour, not only with Gaika, but with all his people. When the chief learnt that

<sup>1</sup> Lichtenstein says *south-easterly*; this must be a mistake, as the position of Alice, near the site of which Gaika then had his "umzi" or "great place," is north-east of Commadagga.



View of Kinnic



among the presents which were taken for him, a suit of clothes was included, his impatience to put them on was only allayed by some of the officers fetching them and assisting him to attach each article to the part of his body for which it was intended. The suit though too small for his massive frame, gratified him intensely, and the pride with which he moved about in it was no less than the admiration expressed by his followers when they gazed upon him thus adorned. To complete his happiness, however, he greatly desired the cloak which the governor wore; as this could not be conveniently spared, he was promised that one like it should be sent to him. This was eventually done, when, besides the cloak, a complete richly gold-laced military uniform, a fine horse with saddle and bridle and ornamental trappings were also sent. European garments of far less imposing character than military uniforms were greatly prized. The queen-mother had been so fortunate as to have a man's night-gown presented to her. The delight she experienced when wearing it in public was only equalled by the envy of the less fortunate. It was considered most becoming, and undoubtedly did much to raise her in the esteem of all who beheld her. On June 24th the conference with Gaika took place in the governor's tent. Conraad Buys acted as interpreter. The chief was further supported by his mother, who seems always to have taken an active part in the politics of the tribe, and a number of confidential advisers. The substance of Gaika's statements was, that as he had no control over the chiefs who had migrated to the west of the Fish River and was at enmity with them, he was unable to restrain them in their depredations upon the colonists, in which he had taken no part, and had not participated in the spoil. He believed it was the intention of those chiefs to attack him and that Ndhlabi was at the bottom of all the mischief. He was not averse to peace with them, but he knew perfectly well that his uncle, who was ambitious to rule, would never submit to him, and had been the chief cause of so many of his subjects deserting him. He agreed that all white people should be compelled to leave Kaffirland, but asked that an exception might be made in the case of Buys, whose counsels were of such value to him. With reference to the maintenance of peaceable relations with the colonists, Gaika mentioned, as an obstacle, a point which,

CHAP. V. some years afterwards, became a most burning question in the Eastern Province, namely, the distance of the seat of Government in Cape Town. It was pointed out to him, that the Commandant of Fort Frederick was accessible and likely to be equally as friendly and efficient in his counsels as Buys. The question of the murder of Jan Botha (the left handed) was broached. It will be remembered that this man was one of the leaders of the Van Jaarsveld rebellion and had fled to Kaffirland on the approach of the British troops. When the Colony again came under Dutch rule, he endeavoured to return, but was murdered, so Gaika said, by Ndhlabi's people and all his property stolen while doing so. Gaika alleged that he had tried to recover this property for the benefit of the widow, but had failed. Ndhlabi's account, subsequently, was that Botha had been murdered at the instigation of Gaika. The conference having ended, General Janssens parted from the chief and his people with mutual good-will. On the following day the return journey was commenced. The governor's next object was to make himself acquainted with the existing arrangements for the management of the district, as well as to consider what steps ought to be taken for the improvement of the administration, which, so far as had been discovered, was not very satisfactory. The journey was pursued in a north-west direction to the village of Graaff Reinet. Arriving there, everything was found to be in the utmost disorder. There was no landdrost, Mr. Bressler having left some time previously. The district chest was empty, the books of accounts unintelligible, and the public buildings were in the last stages of dilapidation. This was the condition of the head and administrative centre of a district comprising nearly half of Cape Colony. As a first step towards remedying this state of affairs, General Janssens appointed as landdrost a Mr. Stockenstrom, the secretary of the district of Swellendam—a most worthy and capable man. The source of revenue to the District Treasury was the assessment of a tax on the stock possessed by the inhabitants, at the rate of four skillings for each hundred sheep, one and a half stiver for each head of cattle, and one rix-dollar<sup>1</sup> for each

<sup>1</sup> One rix-dollar (or rijksdaalder)=four skillings=twenty-four stivers. At this date the rix-dollar was worth about two shillings of English money, hence the skilling was about sixpence and the stiver about a penny.

head of a family having very few cattle. Little, however, could be collected, as the possession of stock was so uncertain in consequence of Kaffir and Bushman depredations. CHAP. V.

Having possessed himself of all the available information with respect to the needs of Graaff Reinet, the governor travelled in a still more northerly direction with a view of coming in contact with the wandering Bushmen. Crossing the Sneeuwberg Mountains, the route lay to Toornberg, now Colesberg, and then on to the Orange River, where the party arrived on July 18th. Many hordes of Bushmen were met with. It was not a little surprising to observe the friendly relations which appeared to exist between these wild people and the colonists of those parts, considering the hatred and dread with which each race had generally regarded the other for so long a time. The governor then continued his journey to the most northern limit of the Colony, namely, Van Plettenberg's Beacon, situated twenty miles to the north-west of the site of the present town of Colesberg and about 200 yards from the east bank of the Seacow River, a tributary of the Orange River. At that place a messenger overtook the party. He had been sent hurriedly from Cape Town with intelligence of the renewal of hostilities between France and England. Realising that his presence might be urgently needed at the seat of Government, the governor hurried thither by the shortest route and with the utmost possible despatch, and arrived there on August 1st, having travelled, so Lichtenstein says, 850 miles in ten days.<sup>1</sup>

In order further to develop the peaceable relations which had been initiated by General Janssens, as well as to insist tactfully on a fulfilment of the promises which had been made, Captain Alberti, who had succeeded to the command of Fort Frederick, was instructed to visit the various chiefs from time to time. This was done with most satisfactory results. A more intimate acquaintance with the sentiments of these people confirmed what had been stated, namely, that the two chief sources of their disunion were the malign influence of Buys among the Gaikas and the uncompromising hatred and contempt of Ndhambi for his nephew. The remedy for the former of these evils was at hand. Buys was reminded of his promise

<sup>1</sup> The railway mileage from Colesberg to Cape Town is 607 miles.  
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to return to the Colony, but endeavoured to excuse himself, perhaps not without reason, on the ground of the danger he feared in passing through the enemy's country in order to reach the Colony. As Captain Alberti, however, afforded him the protection of a sufficiently powerful escort, he finally left Kaffirland after a residence there of nearly nine years. Kaffirland's loss was not the Colony's gain, for Buys, after his long apprenticeship to native life, could not take kindly to the restraints of civilised life, even such as they were in the Eastern Province in those days. He became a freebooter at the head of a horde of thieving rascals and roamed about, out of reach of the law, in the remote regions along the Orange River. His removal from Gaika's territory did not greatly improve the internal affairs of the natives. The petty warfare and mutual recriminations continued and even showed signs of becoming more complicated. A disintegration took place among the people temporarily supporting Ndhlabi. Cungwa and Jalusa separated from him and from one another and reformed their kraals in other places, though still in the Zuurveld. Gaika regarded his promises to the governor very lightly, and by his treatment of those with whom he had professed to desire peace, compelled them to remain in refuge on the west of the Fish River. In spite of all this, however, the farmers suffered much less than they formerly had done. The chiefs showed a disposition to prevent depredations by returning stolen property or making compensation and, in some cases, killing the offenders outright. It seemed, therefore, as if a good understanding between European and native had been at last established and peace and prosperity assured in the near future.

The terms "dark" and "unknown" which were used to characterise the African continent as a whole were, in consequence of the activity of the representatives of the Batavian Government, losing their application for Cape Colony. General Janssens had returned to Cape Town but a few weeks, and Captain Alberti was becoming every day better acquainted with Kaffirland, when the commissary-general, De Mist, also set out on an extended tour of exploration and observation. General Janssens went forth without parade or pomp to deal with emergencies and passed over the country with the least possible delay in order to arrive at places where circumstances

demanded his presence. De Mist, on the other hand, made a leisured tour and travelled with a procession of followers and equipage befitting his dignity as representative of the Batavian Republic in South Africa. Besides the commissary-general himself, the party consisted of his son, who acted as his private secretary, his daughter, the Lady Augusta de Mist, with her lady companion, Madame Versveld of Cape Town, each of these ladies taking a maid-in-waiting. The son of General Janssens was also one of the party. In a more official capacity, there was Dr. Lichtenstein, who acted as medical officer, but whose chief object was scientific research and who eventually gave a full account of the whole expedition in his two valuable volumes, *Travels in South Africa*. Also there were a lieutenant, a corporal and a cadet in command of a party of seven light dragoons, each of whom professed some useful trade, such as carpenter, mechanic, smith, etc.; two gentlemen of the chamber, a surgeon, a book-keeper, a clerk, a courier to go ahead and make the necessary arrangements at the next halting place, and a French horn-player, whose duty it was by the sound of his music to collect together the straggling members of the expedition when on "trek" and, presumably, to act as orchestra during dinner. There were twelve Hottentot servants and four slaves under the superintendence of a sergeant, making in all forty-one persons, not including the drivers and leaders of the oxen. There were six waggons, containing the personal baggage, the tents, provisions, tables, stools, table-linen, plates, dishes, knives and forks, etc., also medicines, presents for Kaffirs, guns and two barrels of gunpowder, travelling forge and materials for repairing the waggons and shoeing the riding horses, tools and Dr. Lichtenstein's books, instruments and boxes for the preservation of specimens of natural history. On October 9th the start was made from Cape Town. The governor with all the principal civil and military officials and a large number of the general public accompanied the cavalcade some distance, while the departure was announced to the remainder of creation by the booming of twenty-one guns at the Castle. Travelling very leisurely, the route lay to the north, first to Saldanha Bay and then to St. Helena Bay. The features of the coast here and there were examined and the mouths of the rivers explored. Turning inland, their course was directed to

CHAP. V. Piquetberg, and thence through the present districts of Tulbagh and Ceres to the "place of John Strauss," now called Matjesfontein, where they arrived on November 2nd. Three weeks of this nomadic existence, with the experience of unloading and reloading waggons to cross rivers and gullies, as well as the vicissitudes inseparable from South African travel, prepared them for the difficulties and dangers yet to be experienced. Much was learnt and collected. The klipspringer and other species of antelope, the lively little dassie, startled by the noise of the cavalcade, snakes, white ants and other forms of animal life added charm to the journey, while *elichrysia*, *chrysocoma* and other botanical treasures found places in an already extensive collection. Reciprocal curiosity and interest were aroused on their arrival at the Hottentot kraals which were visited. The beautiful whiskers of the dragoons and the music of the French horn-player were "mooi, mooi" to the Hottentot. Among the Dutch farmers, Dr. Lichtenstein in particular was a *persona grata*. He carried "Halle medicines" with him and prescribed *pulvis antispasmodicus* and *essentia dulcis* right and left, remedies in which he himself placed no confidence, but the patients did, so all were happy. After leaving Matjesfontein, a south-westerly direction was taken to Goudini, Roodezand, the Zonderend River, a tributary of the Breede, and thence to Swellendam, arriving there on December 8th after two months' travelling from Cape Town.

The chief feature of the fauna at Roodezand, which made most impression on Dr. Lichtenstein, was "the swarm of missionaries" which had invaded the place not long before. Sent out by missionary societies in Holland, which had either been careless in their choice, or unfortunate in the material available, these men with a professedly burning desire to preach to the heathen found themselves arrested on their way by the attractive hospitality and pious disposition of the people of Roodezand. With some new prayers, couched in terms of obscurity and mystery, a few benedictions, and a chapter from the Bible read in a whining lugubrious tone, the supposed sanctity of these lazy sons of piety procured for them an easy and comfortable time.

After remaining five days in the village of Swellendam, De Mist and his party moved off and journeyed along the

coast regions to Mossel Bay and Plettenberg's Bay. Their course then must have been, roughly, along the route now taken by the Port Elizabeth and Avontuur Railway. Passing over the Kromme and Kabeljauws Rivers, some difficulty was experienced in getting the waggons through the Gamtoos River. The lead and silver mines<sup>1</sup> at the mouth of the Van Staaden's River were visited by some, and all eventually joined Captain Alberti at Algoa Bay. The party had not arrived at the halting-place many hours before a solitary waggon, drawn by four ill-conditioned oxen, was seen to be making its laboured way over the sandy approaches to the fort. On it were two white men. One, in particular, of venerable mien was sitting upon a plank placed across the waggon. Although he was bald-headed and it was the hottest part of a December day, he wore no hat. His attire was a threadbare coat, waistcoat and breeches, but no shirt, neck-cloth or stockings. On his feet were leathern sandals. Having descended from his waggon, he presented to view the tall, meagre yet venerable form of Dr. Vanderkemp, the missionary from Bethelsdorp. With slow and dignified steps he approached the commissary-general, who had by this time hastened forward to meet and to greet him with all kindness. These two men, who thus met in such uncivilised surroundings, had known each other thirty-six years previously at the University of Leyden. The change in the circumstances under which De Mist met his quondam fellow-student was no greater than that in Vanderkemp himself. The gay and ambitious lieutenant of dragoons "leading a dissolute life," as Vanderkemp expressed it, had given place to the religious enthusiast, the proof of whose sincerity and ardour in the cause which he felt himself called upon to espouse was complete self-denial and renunciation of all social privileges and comforts. Dr. Vanderkemp returned to Bethelsdorp in the evening, after having spent most of the day in conversation with the commissary-general. De Mist, perhaps chiefly for old association's sake, showed great interest and sympathy in the missionary and his work. Two days afterwards he visited the institution itself. Dr. Lichtenstein accompanied him and thus describes what was seen. "On a wide plain without a tree, almost with-

<sup>1</sup> See note at bottom of p. 74 *ante*.

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out water fit to drink, are scattered forty or fifty little huts in the form of hemispheres, but so low that a man cannot stand upright in them. In the midst is a small clay hut thatched with straw, which goes by the name of a church, and close by some smaller huts of the same materials for the missionaries. All are so wretchedly built, and are kept with so little care and attention, that they have a perfectly ruinous appearance. For a great way round, not a bush is to be seen, for what there might have been originally, have long ago been used for firewood. The ground all round is perfectly naked and hard trodden down, nowhere the least trace of human industry; wherever the eye is cast, nothing is presented but lean, ragged or naked figures with indolent sleepy countenances." "Vanderkemp had not turned his thoughts seriously to instilling habits of industry into his disciples, all idea of their temporal welfare being lost in his anxiety for their salvation." "They were certainly daily instructed for some hours in the Christian religion, but these instructions made more impression upon their memory than upon their understanding. They could sing and pray, and be heartily penitent for their sins and talk of the Lamb and atonement, but none were really the better for all this specious appearance. No attention was paid to giving them proper occupation, and excepting at the hours of prayer they might be as indolent as they chose. This convenient mode of getting themselves fed attracted many of the most worthless and idle amongst these people, and all who applied were indiscriminately received into the establishment. The consequence was that the Colonists soon made heavy complaints of the want of servants, since the Hottentots were much better pleased with leading an indolent life in Vanderkemp's school than in gaining their bread by labour." <sup>1</sup> In justice to Bethelsdorp, it should be borne in mind that the visit of De Mist, during which the above observations were made, was very shortly after it had been re-established and rebuilt, and perhaps before the people had had a fair opportunity of making much progress. Further, the land which was granted was very unfavourable to agriculture, without, at all events, the modern appliances for boring for water, and with-

<sup>1</sup> Lichtenstein's *Travels*, vol. i., p. 238.

out other facilities, which, nowadays, can turn dry and unpromising Karoo into luxuriant flower and vegetable gardens. Before taking leave of the missionary and returning to his camp, De Mist offered Vanderkemp a sum of Rds. 250 for the use of the institution. Instead of taking the money, he asked that its value in useful articles might be supplied from Cape Town. He specified the following: the iron work and wheels for a plough, fifty small hand axes, two dozen small gimlets, four or five penknives, some small hand saws, also a good number of clasp knives, razors, beads and buttons, but *no scissors*, also some instructive and amusing school books. Accordingly, in August, 1804, these articles to the value of the sum which had been offered were sent.

On January 13th the expedition left Algoa Bay for Kaffirland, in order that the commissary-general might also meet the various Kaffir chiefs in the interests of peace. The number of followers already composing the party was still further increased, firstly by Captain Alberti and a company of the Waldeck regiment, and then, as the procession advanced to the east, by farmers, who from time to time were met with and did themselves the honour of joining the cavalcade. The direction followed was much the same as that previously taken by General Janssens. Messengers were sent on ahead to Ndhambi and the chiefs associated with him, inviting them this time to meet and confer with the commissary-general. They had probably not yet recovered from the mental strain and anxiety which the previous meeting with the governor had produced. For, though there can be little doubt but that the message was received,—despite the prospect of presents,—an evasive and non-committal answer of a type usual on occasions when there was fear or suspicion of meeting those in power, was returned, namely, that the chiefs were away hunting and would not return for days. There appearing no probability of meeting with these people, the journey was continued towards the Great Fish River, in the hope of better success with Gaika, to whom a messenger had already been sent. An encampment was made on the bank of that river, at no great distance from the site of the present Carlisle Bridge. While there a message was received, to the effect that as he (Gaika) was making active preparations for war against the rebel chiefs, he begged the

CHAP. commissary-general to travel farther towards his country, and  
V. appointed Hermanus Kraal<sup>1</sup> as a convenient place for the meeting. Thither, therefore, De Mist moved his large camp. Great was the disappointment and disgust when, after the fatigue of this journey in the burning weather of January, they waited two days at the appointed place and found that Gaika had not kept his word. A messenger again was sent, acquainting him with the commissary-general's surprise and displeasure. In answer, a request was brought from Gaika, that a farther advance of one day's journey should be made; that he himself was unable to leave his people as changes in the hostile relations of Ndhlabi's adherents, as well as negotiations he was making with the Tambookies, necessitated his presence in his own country. De Mist, fearing that Gaika might have some intention of seeking the co-operation of his party against the enemy, and that a refusal might undo the good which, so far, had been done, and further, that in his advanced and isolated position, the limited store of provisions for so large a camp was a matter of some concern, decided neither to proceed farther nor to delay his return. He therefore suffered the mortification of commencing the return journey without having seen Gaika; and thus his mission, as far as the Kaffirs were concerned, was a complete failure. Retracing their path to near where they had encamped on the Fish River, the travellers bent their course in a northerly direction towards the Boschberg (Somerset East). A large body of the followers of Cungwa and Jalousa were met. They had finally broken off from Ndhlabi and were on their way to renew their allegiance to their lawful king, Gaika, and eventually to join him in the proposed attack on Ndhlabi. In other parts of the country, empty farm-houses in various stages of demolition and destroyed gardens, sad records of the ruinous visitations of both Kaffirs and Bushmen, were seen. Passing Brintjes Hooghte, the farther route, as well as can be traced, must have been to the north-west, over the country where Pearston now stands, then through the arid Camdeboo plain with Tandjesberg on the right until the conspicuous conical mountain, Spandau, came in sight. Thence over the Sunday's River to the small collec-

<sup>1</sup> Near the present Fort Brown.

tion of meanly constructed houses which constituted the village of Graaff Reinet. CHAP.  
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As far as the welfare and development of the Eastern Province was concerned, the halt at Graaff Reinet was the most important feature of this expensive tour. During the week De Mist remained there, much attention was given to the conditions of the district as a whole as well as to the pressing needs of its magisterial headquarters. The appointment of Mr. Stockenstrom as landdrost, and other measures of re-organisation which had, so shortly before, been initiated by the governor met with his approval. The deplorable state of the public buildings very soon attracted his notice and determined him to take immediate steps for having decent and efficient ones erected.

Instructions were given for the complete demolition of the wattle and daub cottages which, so far, had functioned as magistrate's court and residence, and for a new drostdy house, a prison and accommodation for the secretary of the district and servant of Justice, to be built in their place. For this purpose a sum of Rds. 4,000 was granted from the Public Treasury, to be repaid in eight years at the rate of Rds. 500 per annum. But this sum was soon found to be far from adequate. In the following year, therefore, a total expenditure of Rds. 25,000 at 4 per cent. interest was authorised for the above purpose. Of this sum, however, only Rds. 6,000 had been received up to the time of the second British occupation, at about which time the Drostdy House<sup>1</sup> was finished. The church, mean as it had been at its best, was now in a very bad condition. During the troublous times it had been used as a magazine and barrack, a sacrilegious use which had greatly disgusted and shocked the religious inhabitants. De Mist took steps to have it renovated and rendered fit for the use for which it had been intended. The original church had been destroyed by fire in 1799, and had been replaced at the voluntary expense of the needy inhabitants by the one now to be restored. The most important of all the measures which De Mist brought about at this time, was that arising from his realisation of the enormous extent of the district of Graaff

<sup>1</sup>This building with its grounds was sold in 1847.



CHAP. V. Reinet and the consequent impossibility of its efficient administration by one local authority. To improve matters in this respect, he decided to establish a new and additional landdrost in the regions nearer to the coast and by this means to create a new judicial district out of a portion of that of Graaff Reinet. On February 7th he made this intention public. After having tactfully advised and instructed the various officials in the better performance of their duties, and inspired all with a deep respect and sincere personal affection for himself, he moved with his cavalcade out of Graaff Reinet on February 13th. They wended their way in the first place to the north, towards the Sneeuwberg Mountains. Then leaving the distant Compass Berg and the nearer Oudeberg on the right, the route lay to the west. Shortly before leaving Graaff Reinet, the Lady Augusta de Mist was taken ill, but insisted upon accompanying her father. She suffered much from the hardships and privations of the hot and waterless Karoo, and at times the gravest anxiety was entertained on her account. Before the end of the journey, however, she quite recovered. Travelling along the base of the Nieuwveld Mountains as far as the vicinity of the present Beaufort West, a southerly direction was taken towards the mountainous barrier formed by the rugged and forbidding heights of the Zwartbergen. The great heat and scarcity of water were at times almost insupportable, and the wearisome uniformity of the country painfully depressing. Rest and refreshment were, at length, obtained at the farm of the veld-cornet, De Beer, situated in the region which afterwards became the district of Prince Albert. There the farmers of the surrounding country had met to welcome the commissary general, as his arrival had been expected. After three weeks of this tedious toil and thirst, they were still within the district of Graaff Reinet, and not until they crossed the Dwyka River, a tributary of the Gauritz, did they cross the boundary into the Stellenbosch district. Traversing a wide stretch of flat country known as Constable's Plain, they commenced the difficult and dangerous descent into the Hex River Valley and thence into more fertile and hospitable regions. By easy stages, then, through Goudini and Paarl, the expedition reached Cape Town, on March 23rd, 1804, after an absence of nearly six months.

The further consideration of the advisability of creating

the new district in the East occupied the combined attention of both commissary-general and governor. It was decided that the more southerly portions of Graaff Reinet, namely, those which had been kept in constant ferment by Kaffir depredations, and in which the inhabitants were described as being the most turbulent, should form the new district. The field-cornetries or sub-districts specified were Zwart Ruggens, Bruntjes Hooghte, Zwartkops River, the Zuurveld and Bosjesman's River. To these was added a portion of the Swellendam district on the Kromme and Tzitzikamma Rivers. The district thus formed was comprised, roughly, of the present districts of Albany, Bathurst, Alexandria, Port Elizabeth, Uitenhage, Humansdorp, Somerset East, Jansenville, and a part of Willowmore, and was called in compliment to De Mist, UITENHAGE, a family name of the commissary-general. The previous history of these parts having indicated that peace and order could only be maintained by arms, it was thought advisable that the landdrost should be a military man. Captain Alberti, commanding at Fort Frederick, was therefore appointed provisional or *ad interim* landdrost. In conjunction with a land board (Land Kundige Commissie) he was instructed to select a suitable site for a township and centre of local government.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The following is the authoritative utterance commanding Uitenhage to be —  
"PUBLICATIE. Jan Willem Janssens, Gouverneur en Generaal en Chef over de Colonie de Kaap de Goede Hoop, en den Refforte van dien, aan alle, die dezen zullen zien of hooren lezen, Salut! doet te weeten

"Dat nademaal de Commissaris Generaal van het Bataasch Gouvernement, Mr. J. A. de Mist, by Publicatie van den 7 February dezes Jaars, de Colonie van Graaff Reinet heeft gesplitst in twee deelen of Landdrostyen, waar van het Noordelyke den naam van Graaff Reinet heeft behouden, terwyl omtrent het Zuiklyke, bevattende de Veld Cornetschappen van Zwart Ruggens, Bruntjes Hooghte, Bosjesman's Rivier, Zuurveld, Zwartkops Rivier, benevens een gedeelte van het Drost-Ambt van Swellendam, aan de Zitsekamma en Kromme Rivier by het 4 Artikel des gem Publicatie aan den Gouverneur en Generaal en Chef is overgelaten, om aan deze nieuwe Drosty den naam te geeven, en te bepalen, op welke plaats de Landdrost zyne vaste residentie zal moeten houden. Zo Is' T, dat de Gouverneur en Generaal en Chef heeft besloten, aan het in voegen voorsz van de Colonie Graaff Reinet afgescheiden District te geeven, zo als Hy daar aan geeft by deezen, den naam van UITENHAGE. De provisioneele besturing van hetzelfde Drostamt wordt by deezen opgedragen aan den CAPT. L. ALBERTI commandeerende het Fort Frederick de Algoa Baay, aan Wien mede is gedemanderd, om met adisistentie eener Landkundige Commissie, uit te zien naar een geschikte plaats, welke lot de Residentie van den Landdrost kan worden vastgesteld.

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Their choice fell upon a farm situated about twenty-one miles north-west of Fort Frederick, then in occupation of the widow of one Gerhardus Scheepers. In his report to the Governor, Alberti stated that he, in conjunction with the Commandant Janse van Rensburg and the Field-Cornet Muller, had chosen the farm of Betje Scheepers on the Zwartkops River for the following reasons: (i.) the healthy situation, (ii.) a plentiful supply of good water, (iii.) the fertility of the soil, (iv.) abundance of timber and firewood and also material for brick making, (v.) land sufficient to make it possible to sell or grant a large number of erven (*i.e.* plots of land for building purposes), and lastly, the site being only six hours' walking distance from Fort Frederick. The homestead stood on the land now occupied by the locomotive works at Uitenhage. It was one of the places which had fared badly at the hands of the combined Kaffirs and Hottentots in the rising of 1799; when the inmates were compelled to flee for their lives towards the Gamtoos River, leaving all their stock and other belongings in the hands of the invaders and their home in flames. Gerhardus Scheepers was probably one of those who was murdered at the beginning of the outbreak in July of that year. The widow agreed to part with her property for a sum now equivalent to £400 and the right, during her life-time, to a piece of land a hundred yards square. The formal negotiations were completed on September 22nd, 1804.<sup>1</sup> The site of the new town having been settled, the next step was the erection of public buildings. It was decided that these should be on the same scale as those sanctioned for Graaff Reinet, and the expenditure of a sum of Rds. 25,000 was authorised for this purpose. The state of the Public Treasury at that time, however, did not permit of the

"En word hier van by dezen aan het Publiek de nodige communicatie gegeven met last, aan alle In—en Opgezetenen van voorm District, om den Capt. L. Alberti in het uitoefenen zyner function aller eer, respect en hulpe te bewyzen, want de Gouverneur en Generaal en Chef zulks ten dienste van den Lande bevonden heeft also te behoorem. Op dat niemand hier van ignorantie zal mogen pretenderen zal deze worden gepubliceerd en geaffigeerd, al omme daar men gewoon is publicatie en affixie te doen.

"Aldus gedaan in Zuid Africa, aan de Kaap de Goede Hoop, den 25 April 1804.

"De Gouverneur en Generaal en Chef

"J. W. JANSSENS."

<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B, at end of this chapter.

advance of this sum, hence recourse was had to the issue of paper money. The district of Tulbagh came into existence at the same time as that of Uitenhage and necessitated the expenditure of another Rds. 25,000. In order therefore to render these, as well as some other developments possible, a sum of Rds. 300,000 paper currency was created partly on "the general security of public faith which is inherent in the Batavian Government,"<sup>1</sup> and partly on the buildings which were to be erected by means of it. Of the above sum intended for Uitenhage, only half was received by Captain Alberti, for the second half, being sent at the time when the Colony was passing into the power of the British, fell into the hands of the prize agent.<sup>2</sup> Besides being honoured with the family name of the commissary-general, Uitenhage, at this embryonic stage, was further distinguished by the acquisition of the De Mist armorial bearings, and thus with respect to the right of assuming a coat of arms, Uitenhage takes precedence of all towns in South Africa, Cape Town not excepted. It was, in fact, on account of the idea thus originating in connection with Uitenhage, that Cape Town itself came also to be dignified with the arms of its founder. To complete this measure as far as was possible at that date, the governor suggested that "as Cape Town now gets the arms of its founder and that Uitenhage already has arms as remarkable as they are beautiful (zo eigenaartig als fraay), Stellenbosch should adopt those of Van der Stel, Swellendam those of Swellengrebel, and Graaff Reinet those of Van der Graaff".

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To encourage a population to settle in the new township, plots of land of one morgen in extent were given free on application, the grantees undertaking to erect, on their respective plots, a substantial house within six months. The building of the Drostdy House was soon commenced, but very little progress was made. There was considerable difficulty in procuring, not only skilled workmen but also ordinary labourers, so that by the end of 1805, when the Batavian Government ceased to rule, the height of the walls was only a quarter of what it was intended to be. Hence at that important date, the Eastern Province, for all its past struggles, had not progressed

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Cape Records, vol. v., p. 418.

<sup>2</sup> *Vide* Archives, letters, vol. 123, 1813.

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V. than the beginning of Graaff Reinet, the idea of Uitenhage, and Dr. Vanderkemp's mission station,—that is to say, one dorp, one site and one Hottentot location.

The difficulty of obtaining labour of which Captain Alberti complained was becoming a serious question with the farming community also. It was due not so much to the actual existence of Bethelsdorp, as to the eccentric disposition of its head. Dr. Vanderkemp was undoubtedly actuated by humane and noble motives. His great learning and the deep sincerity of his religious enthusiasm commanded the utmost respect. But these good qualities carried to excess, and combined, perhaps, with a mind failing with advancing age and the dreadful domestic calamity which had overtaken him, seemed to render him incapable of forming a proper estimate of the importance of more mundane affairs, and of subordinating the duties he had undertaken to the administrative necessities of the district. His disinclination to co-operate with Captain Alberti, or, in fact, to follow any course except that dictated by his own peculiar views, soon gave rise to friction between himself and the Government. His influence with the Hottentots, who were congregating at Bethelsdorp in growing numbers, was increasing, as the life he offered them was so much in accord with their own inclination. He regarded with jealousy all attempts to induce any of them to leave the location for the purpose of working elsewhere, and thus the supply of labour was greatly hampered. As there were no other means of procuring the necessary labour required for building the Drostdy House, Captain Alberti managed to enlist the services of some of these people. Considering the ample means at his disposal there is no reason to suppose that they were ill treated. His action, however, led Dr. Vanderkemp to bring before Government charges of injustice and cruelty to the Hottentots; but these were easily refuted.<sup>1</sup> He ignored the immediate authority of the landdrost and maintained that he was answerable directly only to Government in his dealings with the natives, or as he put it, he refused to be regarded as a veld cornet under the landdrost. Captain Alberti, on the other hand, contended that

<sup>1</sup> See Resolutions of July 24th, 1805, Archives, Cape Town.

as Bethelsdorp was in the district of Uitenhage, both Hottentots and missionaries were within his jurisdiction. The ill effect which this creation of an *imperium in imperio* must inevitably produce in a country already prone to disorder, as well as the obstinacy and contempt for properly constituted authority which characterised all his actions, rendered it necessary to banish Vanderkemp entirely from the district,<sup>1</sup> and to leave the management of the place to his subordinate, Mr. James Read. He was absent ten months, until, in fact, the Government which had given him every facility and shown him every possible favour, but which he eventually vilified by charges of oppression, gave way to British rule.

The short time during which the commissary-general and the governor had been in office, and the pressing need there had been for immediate attention to the unsettled state of the East, precluded those officers from taking into consideration the possible danger to the Colony from without. The treaty of peace of Amiens may have been considered of a more permanent character than it really was, and invasion by one of the contracting Powers a remote possibility. The naval force of the Colony was represented by one man-of-war of seventy-four guns, the *Bato*, lying in a dismantled state at Simon's Town, and one cruiser, the *Jupiter*, of 400 tons and carrying eighteen guns, which was incapable of proceeding to sea on account of the almost complete absence of any naval stores. The land force consisted of about 1,500 regulars and about the same number of irregulars, composed of burghers, Hottentots, Javanese and Mozambique slaves. In view of the hostile relations which again obtained between England and France, and the importance of the Cape as an ocean station, this defenceless state, which was well known in England, invited attack and recapture.

In July, 1805, Lord Castlereagh, Secretary of State for the War and Colonial Departments, issued instructions to Major-General Sir David Baird to take command of a large force, and, with the utmost expedition and secrecy, to sail for the Cape. This was all the more necessary as there was reason to believe that France had also turned her attention to the conquest of

<sup>1</sup> See Letter, Cuyler to Smith, April 8th, 1807, Archives, Cape Town. Also Vanderkemp to Government, March 20th, 1806.

CHAP. V. the Colony, and that two vessels which had mysteriously sailed away shortly before, had gone on the same errand. On this account, the force commanded by Sir David Baird was greater than would have been considered necessary had there been the expectation of no other resistance to overcome than that likely to be offered by the Dutch forces at the Cape. At that time, fortunately, the 59th Regiment, the 20th Light Dragoons, 320 Artillery and 548 recruits—about 2,000 in all—were embarking at Falmouth for India. It was decided that these should form part of the expedition, but that the altered destination should not be made known to them until they were well at sea. At Cork about 4,000 troops, namely, the 24th, 38th, 71st, 72nd, 83rd, and 93rd Regiments, were embarked ostensibly for the Mediterranean, and were joined by the force from Falmouth. The whole fleet of sixty-one ships thus formed was under the command of Commodore Sir Home Popham, and sailed from Cork on August 31st.

After a tedious and boisterous voyage of about a month, Madeira was reached. After leaving there all were made acquainted with the real object of the expedition. The course was bent to the coast of Brazil and anchors dropped at San Salvador or Bahia. On the passage thither two of the ships, the transport *King George* and the East India Company's vessel, *Britannia*, were wrecked on the Rocas, a low, sandy island surrounded by a reef of rocks in lat. 5°53' S. and long. 33°54' W. All were saved except General Yorke of the Royal Engineers, one bombardier and one seaman. At San Salvador food supplies, water and about seventy horses were obtained, many of which died on the further voyage to the Cape.

On the evening of January 4th, 1806, the vessels came to anchor between Robben Island and the Blueberg shore. During the next day the shore was everywhere inspected with a view of finding a safe place to land, but the surf was so violent and the rocks so threatening that, in order to avoid delay, the idea was entertained of taking the whole fleet to Saldanha Bay. The 38th Regiment and the 20th Light Dragoons, under command of Brigadier-General Beresford and escorted by the *Diomedé*, man-of-war, did actually land at that place, and in consequence missed all the subsequent excitement of

the march to Cape Town. As the violence of the surf moderated towards the end of the day, the landing was effected at Melkbosch Point, about fifteen miles north of Cape Town. An interesting account of this is given by Colonel John Graham of the 59th Regiment—the founder of Grahamstown—who took an active part in the landing operations. He says<sup>1</sup>:—

“ The first bit of Africa which we saw was Table Hill on Friday, the third day of the year 1806. We lay to the greater part of the night and the fleet anchored in Table Bay on Saturday evening. The signal was immediately made for the 38th and 39th to be held in readiness to land, and about 3 o'clock on Sunday morning, these two regiments made an attempt about twelve miles from Cape Town. But the surf was so high as to render it impossible to disembark. About 5 o'clock on Monday (the 6th) the signal for the Highland Brigade to be in readiness to land was made. The *Leda* anchored further in shore, off a small creek called Lospard's Bay, fifteen or sixteen miles from this (Cape Town), where two gun boats already were stationed, for the purpose of covering the landing. About 1 o'clock we shoved off towards the shore. It blew so fresh and there was so much surf that it was the intention to have run a small brig on shore as a breakwater. On we went, however, the 71st leading. We had unfortunately to make a sort of turn to our right in order to avoid a sunken rock, then, from the swell and the wind the boats unavoidably got into such a crowd that many of the turning boats could make no use of their oars. We were not then half a common shot from the beach or sand hills. Had the enemy had a couple of guns, we must have lost a vast number of men—every shot must have told. As the leading boats got within half musket shot, about a hundred Jägers threw themselves into the bushes and kept popping away until the 71st light company landed. They very soon made them scamper away from the first ridge of sandhills to the second. . . . One of the boats from the Charlotte had been unable to push to windward of the rock above mentioned, she touched it, instantly turned bottom up, and down went 36 of our brave fellows (of the 93rd

<sup>1</sup> In a private letter to his father. For permission to use the above extract, the author is indebted to the kindness of Sir John Graham, of the Law Department, Cape Town, and grandson of Colonel John Graham.



CHAP. V. Regiment), cheering as they sank. Only three bodies of the 36 were thrown on the shore, or ever seen more. The remainder of the day and all Tuesday we were obliged to wait for guns, stores, etc. At day-break on Wednesday, the 8th, I was ordered to form the advanced guard, and away we went to wait on General Janssens. It is impossible to give an idea of the difficulty of march on the ground over which we had to go, the great irregularity of the surface, the deepest sand I ever saw, and the whole covered with almost impenetrable brush-wood. Mr. Janssens and his friends lay about five miles from where we landed. We had a steep hill to ascend, and if he had thought proper to repel us with his artillery during our march up, he again might have done us great injury, and found a perfectly safe retreat back to his position."

The arrival of the British fleet was not unexpected at the Cape, for a French privateer had been chased by an English frigate, and, to escape capture, had run ashore near Hout Bay. And later, another vessel had brought intelligence that a large number of English ships had been seen sailing to the south. General Janssens lost no time in spreading the news to the surrounding districts and in collecting together the components of his heterogeneous army. As soon as it was known that a landing was actually in progress, a forward move was made in the hope of occupying the advantageous height of the Blueberg. But too late; the British were found to be already in possession, and, with a force of over 4,000 men, approaching Cape Town. Both sides opened fire. From the beginning of the fight neither side seemed to entertain any doubt as to the ultimate result. The Waldeck regiment, which consisted largely of Austrian and Hungarian prisoners, who apart from their pay had little interest in the defence of the Cape, were soon dismayed by the British fire and precipitately fled, thus demoralising the remainder. General Janssens, with a bravery for which he had long been renowned, rode along his lines and urged his men on, but the odds were too heavy against them and in the end they were completely routed. General Janssens, with about 1,000 of his men, took refuge in the Hottentots Holland Mountains. The casualties on the British side were, one officer and fourteen rank and file killed, 189 of all ranks wounded and eight missing. On the side of the Dutch, Sir David Baird in

his report to Lord Castlereagh on January 12th, 1806, said: CHAP.  
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"The loss of the enemy in this engagement is reputed to exceed 700 men killed and wounded". This number is, in all probability, greatly overestimated. The victorious march was continued. At the Salt River, Count von Prothalow, whom General Janssens had appointed to remain in Cape Town with a small force for its defence, sent a flag of truce and asked for forty-eight hours' cessation of hostilities. Six hours were allowed in which to surrender the town and its outworks and thirty-six hours for the arrangement of the preliminary articles of capitulation. Sir David Baird had been instructed before leaving England to open up communication with persons in authority with a view of entering into negotiations for granting favourable and liberal terms of capitulation. Having effected this, he was to assume the title of lieutenant-governor and to take upon himself the civil government, preserving to the inhabitants the enjoyment of their private property, usages and religion, and to induce the foreign soldiers, not being Frenchmen, to enter the British service, or, if they preferred it, the service of the East India Company. The preliminary articles of capitulation were signed at Papendorp, near Fort Knokke, now Woodstock, on January 10th.

Having taken possession of the town, the inhabitants were convened for the purpose of taking the oath of allegiance to his Majesty's Government. The ordinary functions of the several official departments were continued, and as supreme municipal authority, Mr. W. S. Ryneveld, a man of character, talent and known attachment to the British Government, was appointed chief civil magistrate. Steps were taken to supplement the scanty stores of food by despatching vessels to St. Helena and India for supplies of grain and rice. In all of this Sir David Baird had acted up to the spirit of his instructions. Having thus so far attained the end in view, there yet remained the task of inducing the self-exiled governor to surrender his arms and authority. Although he was powerless to do anything to dislodge the invaders or to regain any of the ground he had lost, yet by holding out in the position he occupied, he had it within his power to prolong the state of warfare, by cutting off, for a time at least, the supplies which came from regions lying to the east of the Hottentots Holland Mountains,

CHAP. Further, it was felt that difficulties might be increased by the  
 V. general attracting around himself the inhabitants who were known to manifest an attachment towards him and sympathy in his misfortunes, and who, on that account, could hardly be expected to view a change of rulers with impartiality. Sir David Baird made the first overtures of peace by transmitting to General Janssens the following letter:—

“Cape Town,  
 “January 11th, 1806.

“SIR,  
 “You have discharged your Duty to your Country as became a brave Man at the head of a gallant tho' feeble Army. I know how to respect the high qualities of such a Man, and do not doubt that that Humanity which ever characterizes an intrepid Soldier will now operate in your Breast to check the fatal consequences of a futile Contest. The Naval and Military Forces of his Britannic Majesty which have possessed themselves of the Seat of your recent Government are of a magnitude to leave no question respecting the Issue of further hostilities; and therefore a temporary and disastrous resistance is all you can possibly oppose to superior numbers. Under these circumstances nothing can result but the devastation of the Country you casually occupy, and such a consequence can never be contemplated without anguish by a generous Mind, or be gratifying to the Man who feels for the prosperity and tranquillity of the Colony lately subject to his Administration. But if unhappily your resolution is formed to oppose an Enemy of such superior Force, by protracting a Contest which must entail Misery and Ruin on the industrious and peaceable disposed Settlers of this Colony, I shall be exonerated from the reproach of my own Conscience by this frank Overture, and you must justify to yourself and to your Countrymen the further Effusion of Blood and the desolation of the Country. You are necessarily so well acquainted with the extent of the Calamities in which the interior of the Country may be involved, that I shall not enlarge upon your power of causing mischief to be done to all its Inhabitants; but I persuade myself that Considerations of a more laudable nature will influence your decision on this occasion, and that you will manifest an immediate

disposition to promote a general Tranquillity. I have the honour to subscribe with Sentiments of the highest respect and consideration,

CHAP.  
V.

"Sir, etc.,  
"(Signed) D. BAIRD."

Although General Janssens must have realised that the condition of affairs was as had been so forcibly and correctly expressed by Sir David Baird, he, nevertheless, held out for some time, being unable to determine what course to pursue. His humanity and sincere regard for the inhabitants induced him to surrender rather than bring upon them further horrors of war; while, on the other hand, the imperious expectations of his Government, coupled perhaps with the remembrance of the trouble that befell Sluysken at the previous capture, dictated further resistance. As, for a time, there seemed to be little prospect of any decision being formed, the British troops began to move towards his position, the 59th and 72nd towards Tulbagh and the 93rd towards Hottentots Holland. The former course was finally adopted. With some slight modifications of the terms first proposed, General Janssens signed the Articles of Capitulation on January 18th, surrendering to his Britannic Majesty "the whole of the Settlement of the Cape of Good Hope, with all its Dependencies, and the rights and privileges held and exercised by the Batavian Government". The Batavian troops were then marched with all the honours of war to a camp which was formed for them at Simon's Town. They were not considered as prisoners of war; all were allowed to retain their private property and the officers their horses and swords. All were provided for at British expense while waiting for embarkation and then sent in British ships to Holland. The expenditure in pay and allowances alone was £7,769 2s. 8d. On March 6th, 1807, seven British transports left Table Bay, having on board 667 officers and men, 160 women and children and thirty-one civilians. Thus, for the second time, the Colony came under British rule.

CHAP.  
V.

## APPENDIX A.

## PROVISIONAL GENERAL REGULATIONS FOR BETHELSDORP.

J. W. JANSSENS, GOVERNOR AND GENERAL, CAPE OF GOOD HOPE,  
TO MR. J. T. VAN DER KEMP, PRESIDENT OF THE MISSION  
INSTITUTE FOR THE CONVERSION AND TEACHING OF THE HOT-  
TENTOTS AT ALGOA BAY.

SIR,

The Commissary General Mr. J. A. de Mist, appointed by the Supreme Government of the Republic to reorganize the Colony and to form Laws for the same, it will rest with him, definitely, to settle all the advantages and obligations by which the different Missions in this Colony for the conversion and instruction of the Heathens are to be regulated. One thing I can say—that the natives will find in him a sincere and powerful protector.—The situation in which you find yourself placed with the Hottentots can no longer continue upon its present uncertain footing without exertions, and thence without the produce of the soil; to put an end to this, and, as much as lies in my power, to acquiesce in your request, I will consent to your settling at the place which yesterday, under my authority, was pointed out by Messrs. D. van Reenen, the Commandants Botha and van Rooyen, Gerhardus Oosthuizen and, on your behalf, Mr. J. Read, situated at the Roode Pass near a spring between the Recognitie Plaats of Thomas Ignatius Ferreira the Elder, and that of the widow Scheepers,—according to your wish it may take the name of Bethelsdorp.—According to the information I have received, the place is well calculated for the support of cattle, for the cultivation of grain and for the forming of gardens.—I have no particular map of that District, and am at a great distance from the registers and archives of the Colony. Therefore the present grant must necessarily be subject to this provision that no one's right or property must in any ways be injured, and that you shall have to conduct yourself with respect to the neighbouring places, conformably to the still at present existing laws, as they also in like manner shall have to conduct themselves towards you in the same obedience.—The usual forms, required for the settling of this land as a loan place, must wait my return to the Capital.—The fixing of the boundaries of Bethelsdorp I shall instruct to the Commanding Officer at Algoa Bay, together with the Field-Cornet for the District, to whom you may add another. The following I wish to have observed as provisional general Regulations: (1) The Institute at Bethelsdorp is under the protection of the Officer

Commanding at Fort Frederick. (2) The Institute knows no other authority, of political influence, than that of the Batavian Government and must teach the same and make it understood by the Hottentots. (3) No individuals shall be admitted into the Institute who are under lawful obligations to serve with the inhabitants, but on the contrary they shall be encouraged thus freely to engage themselves for service with the inhabitants; and the Institute can make written contracts for them in the spirit and upon the principle of the provisional instructions given by the Governor, and Commissary General for the protection of the Hottentots, and with which the Governor has caused Mr. van der Kemp to be made acquainted. (4) In case of misunderstandings between the inhabitants and Hottentots, which the Missionaries cannot amicably adjust, they shall report the same to the Officer Commanding at Fort Frederick, who shall hear the Field-Cornet and the parties respecting it, and, until the Civil Authorities shall be acquainted, he shall pronounce judgment upon such matters. (5) Mr. van der Kemp will have the goodness to transmit as correct a list as possible of the names of those belonging to the Institute, to the Office at Fort Frederick, and when the said Institute shall have been organised at Bethelsdorp, it will be less difficult to repeat the same every three months, specifying the Hottentots newly added to or retiring from the same. (6) It is the desire of the Government that the number of Hottentots at one place be not too much increased; if the numbers should greatly augment, they would point out other places, but still think it preferable that many Hottentots should be distributed among the inhabitants. (7) No Hottentots are permitted to have firearms. Mr. van der Kemp is permitted to have fire arms, the same as all other inhabitants, and also Hottentots going out hunting or who are otherwise furnished with a permit to that effect. (8) At the Institute there must never be more than a small quantity of gunpowder. The Officer at Fort Frederick is authorised, on proper application being made, to furnish small quantities of it to Mr. van der Kemp against payments fixed by regulation. (9) Hottentots coming from among the Caffres, or wandering hordes, must immediately surrender their arms, and they are to be put into the hands of the Commanding Officer at Fort Frederick. (10) Mr. van der Kemp shall watch with the utmost care that the Hottentots give no offence to the inhabitants. (11) The Institute is to contribute to the securing of order, peace and tranquillity and to mutual protection. (12) The Institute has the advantage of the special protection of the Commanding Officer at Fort Frederick and must therefore endeavour to render themselves as useful as possible. (13) No services are required of the Hottentots, but upon the terms of good treatment and just rewards. (14)

CHAP. V. Mr. van der Kemp will use his influence to bring together and keep in proper obedience Hottentots that may not belong to the Institute, such as Stuurman and those under him. The Governor trusting the foregoing to be sufficient for the present in order to keep matters from getting into confusion, wishes that Mr. van der Kemp and his Institute may experience Heaven's choicest blessings, that his endeavours for the benefit of the natives of this Colony and of the Republic in general may prove successful. Inviting Mr. van der Kemp to continued correspondence with him, he remains with regard,  
(Signed) J. W. JANSSENS.

## APPENDIX B.

## WIDOW SCHEEPERS' FARM AND UITENHAGE.

ALGOA BAY, *May 8th*, 1806.

The widow Scheepers, from whom the farm was purchased where the Drostdy is now building, says she was promised a Lot of 100 yards square by my predecessor, and which I believe to be true, as there is now to be seen part of an unfinished house, which she says the late Landdrost stopped her from finishing at the time the English came to the Cape. She adds she was promised the Lot for her life time, but now she has made a request to have it *in perpetuity*. (The same as I believe the other Lots were intended to be given out.) The situation of this Lot will not in the smallest degree interfere with the situation of the intended village Lots when they come to be laid out . . . it being in an out of the way place, and some distance from the ground on which the village Lots must be laid out. The widow Scheepers at present lives in a house belonging to the Drostdy (formerly her own) and very near the new house now building for the Landdrost. The house she at present occupies would be very useful as a store house (to preserve the boards and other materials from damaging) for the Drostdy, provided she had another place to move to. I would therefore recommend the granting of this Lot to the widow on such terms as may be thought fit.

UITENHAGE, *May 9th*, 1809.

SIR—Agreeably to His Excellency the Governor's assent contained in the letter from your office of the 17th March last that the Widow Scheepers should have her Lot, situated in this Drostdy granted to her to the same extent and on the same footing as the other settlers in the village had their Lots, Mr. Knobel has surveyed

the Lot in question and the diagram of (in duplicate) which I have the honour to cover. I hope it may please His Excellency to grant the same to Susanna Elisabeth van Leeuwen, widow of Gerhardus Scheepers. I have further the honour to request that it may be expressly stated in the grant that this Lot has no right to a supply of water to be led out of the Drostdy canal other than the right of fetching the drink-water from the said watercourse and will be subject to all other servitudes respecting the repairs of roads, etc. as the other Lots in the village are or hereafter may be.

CHAP.  
V.

(Signed) J. G. CUYLER.

TO COLONIAL SECRETARY, CAPE TOWN.



## CHAPTER VI.

### THE EASTERN PROVINCE STRUGGLES FOR EXISTENCE.

CHAP. VI. WHEN, for the second time, the Cape of Good Hope came under British rule, but little advance had been made in the development of the vast extent of country which constituted the districts of Graaff Reinet and Uitenhage. The Eastern Province was still in the first stage of its evolution. In 1806, Port Elizabeth was represented by the solitary outpost, Fort Frederick. Uitenhage, no less solitary, consisted of the unfinished Drostdy House and the homestead of "Widow Scheepers"; while the distant and isolated Graaff Reinet, the "interior" of those days, was only beginning to emerge from the wattle and daub stage of its existence.<sup>1</sup> With the exception of the inhabitants of these places, the meagre white population was dispersed over a very wide area, the primitive farm-houses being, for the most part, situated in pathless solitudes and at great distances from one another. The total population of both districts, including Hottentots and slaves, according to the returns issued at the end of 1806, was 16,254.<sup>2</sup>

The hardships and disabilities arising from the scattered state of the comparatively small number of colonists, together with the great distance of the districts from Cape Town, were many, and could not but have a demoralising influence upon the best intentioned people. The nearest market for the disposal of stock and produce was Cape Town, more than a month's waggon journey from some parts; hence there was little inducement to produce more than the barest necessities of existence. In this connection, there was the further dis-

<sup>1</sup> In the year 1806 thirty-seven houses were built in the village of Graaff Reinet.

<sup>2</sup> In the Graaff Reinet district there were 4,497 Europeans, 4,730 Hottentots and 1,382 slaves. In the Uitenhage district there were 2,454 Europeans, 2,668 Hottentots and 523 slaves—or in all, 6,951 Europeans, 7,398 Hottentots and 1,915 slaves.

couragement arising from incessant native marauding, any accumulation of stock being the surest way of attracting trouble and danger. The only church in the two districts, such as it was, was that at Graaff Reinet, and the only means of education was that afforded by the soldier schoolmaster, who, in most cases as ignorant as those whom he professed to teach, was often an acquisition of very doubtful value to any family. No medical assistance was available in the worst cases of sickness, for there was no properly qualified practitioner in the whole of the Eastern Province.<sup>1</sup>

The tracts of land which constituted the farms were not the properties of those who resided upon them and used them as pastures. All was Government land. The "places" were "loaned" or granted to the occupiers at an annual rental of Rds. 24 (£2 8s.). They were called Leenings-Plaatzen, or Loan Places. At the date referred to, this was practically the only form of land tenure in the frontier districts. The procedure of obtaining such a grant was as follows: the individual desiring a "place" selected some spot suitable for a residence or homestead, and then taking that as centre, all the ground which could be covered in half an hour's walk radially in all directions was considered as the customary extent of the farm. According to this method, the "place" was nominally about three miles in diameter, but as there were no fences and as the beacons and boundaries were often indefinite, the extent could be much larger, especially if the adjacent lands were uninhabited. Application was then made to Government for per-

<sup>1</sup> There were not many in the more favoured West. In April, 1807, the Lieutenant Governor, General H. G. Grey, having learnt that a considerable number of persons officiated as physicians and surgeons who had never been properly educated and who were by no means sufficiently qualified, instituted a Supreme Medical Council. It consisted in the first place of A. Baillie, M.D., Deputy Inspector of Army Hospitals, A. L. Emerson, M.D., Physician to the Forces, and L. M. Biecard of the Batavian Jagers (*vide Proc.* April 24th, 1807). All persons practising as physicians or surgeons, selling drugs or making up prescriptions had to appear before this Council and show their diplomas or certificates. In the event of their inability to do this, an examination was instituted which they were required to pass. In the first instance, the Council licensed five physicians, nine surgeons and nine apothecaries in Cape Town, and ten various practitioners in the nearer country districts, such as Stellenbosch and the Paarl, but none in the Eastern Province (*vide Proc.* Aug. 14th, 1807). The Council was abolished in 1821 and its place taken by a Colonial Medical Inspector (*vide Proc.* Sept. 21st, 1821).

CHAP. mission to occupy, and a form containing a number of questions  
VI. had to be filled in.<sup>1</sup> Before permission from Government was obtained, the land had to be inspected by the nearest field-cornet, haemraad or some superior official, when, no reason for refusing being apparent, the grant was made out on a five rix-dollar stamp—that is, the grantee had to pay Rds. 5 for the permission over and above the rent, and as this application had to be renewed annually on a stamp of this value, the total rent of a loan place was about three pounds annually. In the event of non-payment of rent or neglect to renew the application to occupy, the land reverted to Government. The buildings upon such a place were known as the “opstal,” and were regarded as the property of those who erected them, so that in the case of Government resuming possession of the land, they were valued and paid for. One farmer might transfer his grant to another on payment of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. transfer duty on the opstal. This tenure of land was unsatisfactory

<sup>1</sup> The following is a translation of one of the forms with the answers to the questions in a particular case —

(1) Who has made the application? Give clearly the Christian name and surname. Jurie Johannes Kemp. (2) What is the name of the place? The Red Krantz. (3) Standing in the centre and facing eastwards, what mountains, rivers, hills, rocks, springs, roads or other distinctive features lay before you? The Gamtoos river ebb and flow. (4) What is behind you? A plain with woods. (5) What is to your right? Krantzies with plains beyond. (6) What to your left? The Gamtoos ebb and flow. (7) What lies between the two? (No answer.) (8) What beacon did you put up? A bush. (9) How far is the centre from the distinctive feature you describe in front of you? Three hundred paces. Behind you? Five hundred paces between the bushes and the grassy plain. To the right? Rocks and high ridges. To the left? The ebb and flow. Between the two? (No answer.) (10) Is the country mountainous or flat? Mountainous. (11) Is the country capable of cultivation? No. (12) For what products? (13) Is the place applied or adapted for cattle? Yes. (14) What kind of cattle? Oxen and cows and sheep. (15) What number of each kind can be kept on the place without damaging it? Ten head of cattle and 200 sheep. (16) Is there a river or spring on the farm? No. (17) If so, which river or spring? (18) How strong is the flow in summer? (19) Can the water be led out? and over which portion of the place? (20) Failing a river or spring, how is the place supplied with water? When the river is full after heavy rains, there is water on the farm. (21) What is the distance of the place from the Drostdy? Sixteen hours' walking. (22) The distance from Cape Town? Two hundred hours' walking. (23) When did you make application? On Thursday, 19th June, 1806. (24) Who are the parties concerned in this transaction? No one. (25) What has each contributed? (26) How far is the place applied for from the neighbouring farms? An hour and a quarter's walk from P. J. Kemp. (27) Are you of opinion that the place can be given out without damage to the neighbouring farms? Yes. (28) Why do you think so? Because it cannot injure any one. (29) Is there any outspan in the vicinity of the place or near it? No. (30) If so, what is the distance of the outspan from the centre?

The frequent applications created a sense of only temporary occupation which was not conducive to improvement and development, and further, an injustice was done in levying the same rent on every place regardless of differences in value of the land and natural advantages. At a slightly later date, namely in 1809, Sir John Cradock endeavoured to obviate this by refusing to grant any further Leenings-Plaatzten, but, instead, of granting land on the *Erfpacht* or quitrent tenure.<sup>1</sup> According to this, the land was held for a period of fifteen years at an annual rental of from four to eight skillings per morgen (*i.e.* from one to two shillings per acre), a rent far too high, considering the large extent of land which was necessary in consequence of the poorness of the soil in many parts. The grant was renewable at the expiration of the fifteen years, and at any time the grantee might dispose of it to another on payment of 4 per cent. transfer duty. The other land tenures at this date, though not existing in the Eastern Province, were the *Eigendom's* land, or land in perpetuity, and the *Leenings Eigendom*. The former was the ordinary complete purchase of land, on which, of course, no rent was paid. The latter was associated with this. It was the land adjoining an *Eigendom* which might be "loaned" and thus form an extension of the *Eigendom*. An annual rental of Rds. 24 was paid for such extension.

The maintenance of law and order among the farmers themselves was effected in a very simple and inexpensive, yet efficient, manner. The fact that this was possible is a striking proof of the generally peaceable and law-abiding disposition of the simple-minded Boer. It is only fair and just to the character of these people to state that, even when farthest removed from the restraint of the law, very little actual crime was ever committed by them. The worst which can be said is, that, ignorant and misguided, they, at times, sincerely believed themselves to be the victims of political injustice and oppression and attempted either to resist or to place themselves beyond the reach of the power they felt was hostile to their welfare. The wholesale charges of cruelty to the natives which have been brought against the Boers have, in most cases, where investigation has taken place, been shown to be exaggerations, or apparently

<sup>1</sup> For fuller account of land tenure, see chap. ix. of this volume.

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VI.

wilful attempts to mislead public opinion by the suppression of the truth of the real causes which led to the unhappy conflicts.<sup>1</sup> In consequence of the great extent of the districts over which the landdrost had authority, that official could not act promptly and efficiently in the more distant parts. In order therefore to expedite matters wherein the public good did not admit of delay, and also to effect some control over the more inaccessible regions, some of the inhabitants of known respectability and probity were invested with authority over those dwelling within a limited area and were empowered to act as a kind of subordinate magistrates. They were known as FIELD-CORNETS or VELDWACHTMEESTERS, and the smaller district over which they had control was called a FIELD-CORNETCY. The appointment was made by the governor on the nomination and recommendation of the landdrost. The duties of a field-cornet were many and various. Speaking broadly, he was responsible for the general good order and social welfare of the district committed to his charge. All Government notices, proclamations and orders were sent to him, and were by him made known to the inhabitants and due observance of them enforced. In cases of crime, he had to act as detective and police officer, to investigate the details and to collect information and witnesses preparatory to bringing the case before the landdrost. In cases of suspicious death, he acted as coroner and jury, and his report was considered as the official report of the inquest. For the protection of field-cornetcy in particular and the whole district in general, he had to keep an exact register of the inhabitants capable of serving on commando, and when occasion required, as unfortunately it frequently did, he had to call out the burghers, and, at their head, go forth in quest of stolen cattle, horses and sheep. The roads, the post, the transmission of despatches and all matters of like public nature had legitimate claims upon his attention. For all these duties he received no actual salary, but was excused the Rds. 24 rent on his loan place and also the "opgaaf" or tax on his

<sup>1</sup> *Vide*, as one instance among many, a pamphlet published in Cape Town in 1841 containing correspondence between Donald Moodie and the Rev. John Philip "relative to the production for publication of alleged 'official authority' for the statement that 'in the year 1774 the whole race of Bushmen or Hottentots who had not submitted to servitude was ordered to be seized or extirpated'".

stock, and perhaps also was allowed the additional privilege of shooting game without taking out the customary licence. In carrying out these duties, the field-cornet was authorised to enlist the assistance of any of the inhabitants, who, however, enjoyed no privilege and received no remuneration beyond the satisfaction of feeling that they had acted in the public good. In the transmission of despatches and prisoners, the farmers were bound, on the application of the field-cornet, to furnish waggons, oxen or horses, and in the event of refusal or neglect were liable to a fine of Rds. 50. The repair of the roads and drifts was done by the slaves and Hottentots in the service of the farmers, who also defrayed the expense. The officials next above the field-cornets were those known as HAEMRAADEN. Their chief function was to meet at certain fixed times at the drostdy, and, with the landdrost, to form the executive committee for the management of the district, known as the Board of Landdrost and Haemraaden. The qualifications for the office were, to be not less than thirty years of age, to be "the most notable and experienced among the inhabitants," and to be possessed of considerable immovable property. The position was one of distinction, and perhaps comparable with that of member of Parliament. Like the field-cornets, they were nominated by the landdrost and elected by the governor. There were usually six for each district; two retired annually but were eligible for re-election. Their duties were twofold. In the country, by their supposed superior intelligence, they were expected to make climatic and other observations with a view of developing the natural resources of the district, and by example and encouragement they were to infuse a spirit of industry and orderly behaviour in others. In the town, their duties were partly administrative and partly judicial. The Board of Landdrost and Haemraaden, among other matters, was responsible for the general management of the public finance. In the execution of their judicial functions, they were called upon to settle all disputes respecting lands and boundaries, the impounding of cattle and the like. In all real and personal suits for money, they were competent to act in cases involving amounts up to Rds. 300, exclusive of interest and costs. Appeals might be lodged against their decisions if made, in the cases of the districts of Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet, within

CHAP. sixteen weeks. It was considered of far greater importance,  
VI. however, that the haemraaden should use their influence to discourage litigation and to persuade the parties to settle their differences amicably.

In addition to the landdrost, there were, at each of the drostdies in the country districts, three other permanent officials, namely, a SECRETARY, an UNDER-SHERIFF, and a MESSENGER (bode). The under-sheriff had a staff of six mounted orderlies or policemen and six inferior attendants, usually natives. The duties of the secretary of the district, besides those of attending all the meetings of the Board, making and keeping records of all proceedings both administrative and judicial, were, in the earlier years at all events, to act as the only notary public and also as vendue master or public auctioneer.<sup>1</sup> In this capacity he was responsible to Government for the vendue taxes on all sales, for which duty, in addition to a salary of about £60 per annum with quarters rent free, he was allowed to deduct for himself 2 per cent. on all sales of immovable and  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on movable property. The under-sheriff performed all the duties which usually belong to the head of the police, such as preserving order in the town and making or superintending patrols in the country. He effected the arrest of offenders and had the charge of the tronk or jail and of all prisoners. His pay was about £36 per annum (Rds. 365) with free lodgings and rations at Government expense. The police orderlies received Rds. 15 per month, the attendants Rds. 5, but these had to be rationed at the expense of the district. The messenger was a general servant attending on the landdrost and secretary. He served summonses, citations and other notices on the individuals concerned and also acted as court attendant. He was allowed quarters rent free and received £30 per annum, together with some small fees for making journeys of some distance from the drostdy.

The currency of the Eastern Province at the beginning of the nineteenth century was almost entirely paper money. There was some coin, but it was a heterogenous mixture of the coinages of England, Holland, Spain, Portugal and India, which came into circulation through Cape Town, that port

<sup>1</sup> This office was abolished on December 16th, 1816.



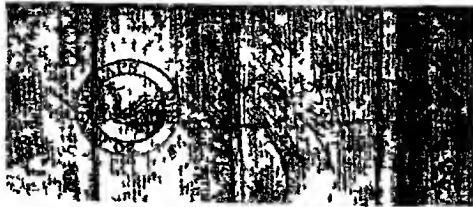


# OLD CAPE PAPER MONEY

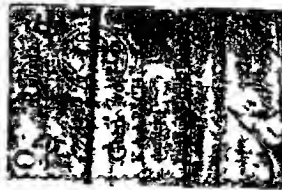
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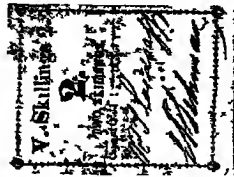
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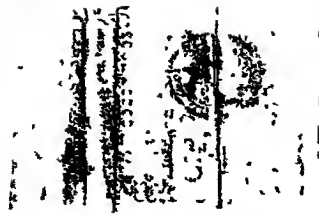


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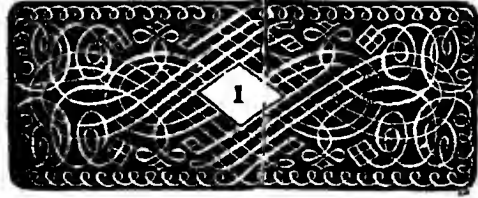
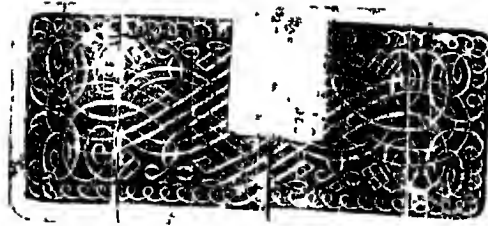


1824

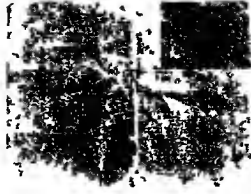




*Photo Hepburn & Jeans*



*Old Cavi Papi Money (Back view)*





being the rendezvous for ships of these different countries. The uncertain relative exchange value of these various moneys created much confusion, and was a source of perplexity to minds more enlightened than those of the Eastern Province Boers. In order to prevent dispute and to protect the simple against the more knowing, and also for the better general regulation of trade, Sir David Baird issued a proclamation dated January 23rd, 1806, determining the value of each of the foreign coins then in circulation. The following is the list with the value of each in English money:—

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Denomination.	Cape Currency.	English Value.
A guinea . . . .	44 skillings or 264 stivers	£1 2 0
A doubloon (16 Spanish dollars) . . . .	160 " " 960 "	4 0 0
A Johanna (8 Spanish dollars) . . . .	80 " " 480 "	2 0 0
A ducat . . . .	19 " " 144 "	9 6
A Venetian sequin . . . .	19 " " 144 "	9 6
A gold mohr . . . .	. . . .	1 17 6
A pagoda . . . .	16 " " 96 "	8 0
A Spanish dollar . . . .	10 " " 60 "	5 0
A rupee . . . .	5 " " 30 "	2 6
English shilling . . . .	2 " " 12 "	1 0
Copper coin . . . .	. . . . 2 "	2

The paper rix-dollar was equivalent to 4 skillings or 24 stivers, hence according to the above, the rix-dollar was equivalent to two skillings, the skilling to sixpence and the stiver to one penny. The "copper coins" mentioned in the list were probably English pennies and were rated at the value of *two* pence each, though the English shilling does not appear to have been rated at two skillings. In taking over the Cape Treasury in 1806, Sir David Baird found Spanish dollars to the value of £11,510, silver florins to the value of £600 and £2,500 in copper coins.

During the short occupation by the Batavian Government, General Janssens imported a silver coinage of low value from Holland in order to obviate the inconvenience which had arisen from the want of a circulating medium of that nature. Circumstances, however, prevented him from issuing it. By a proclamation dated June 12th, 1806, Sir David Baird announced his intention of putting this into circulation. It con-

CHAP. VI. sisted of a small silver coin called a quarter guilder, which was regarded as equivalent to the paper skilling (*i.e.* sixpence), and another, the eighth guilder, equivalent to half the above, namely, three stivers. In this document it is also stated that "a considerable number of English copper penny pieces were imported into this settlement during the last war"; these were probably the copper coins which were found in the Treasury and which, in January, were decreed to be of the value of one stiver. In June, Sir David Baird revoked "all former proclamations and orders" and directed "that these penny pieces should henceforth pass current for *two* stivers". The rix-dollar, skilling and stiver were entirely of paper. They were not of the dignity of bank-notes but more of the nature of "Good fors". The earlier ones, in fact, bore the words "Goed voor . . . Kaapsche Rijksdaalders". (In the illustration, the note on the left is a "Goed voor Vyf Rijksdaalders," one of the 2,500 stamped and signed on November 10th, 1808.) This paper, or perhaps more correctly cardboard, money was not very durable. Some of the pieces, for instance the rix-dollars notes, were inconveniently large, being about  $5\frac{3}{4}$  inches long and  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches wide. In everyday use they became folded. This resulted in their soon being torn into two or more pieces; and besides this, they soon became defaced and very dirty. All this necessitated frequent reprinting of new paper money, and complete destruction of that which was worn out. When occasion arose for a renewal, the receiver-general and a member of the High Court of Justice were appointed by the governor to examine, conjointly, all the worn-out and defaced paper money which had found its way back to the Treasury. The secretary of the Court of Justice then applied at the office of the Colonial Secretary for the box containing the dies or metal stamps and also for a quantity of cartoon. These were pieces of stout paper cut to the proper size and having on one side a coloured design (see the second illustration, where the second figure from the right represents the back view of one of the 1,000 pieces of 20 rix-dollars each, "the backs of which were blue," *vide Proc.* August 5th, 1814). Then in the presence of the fiscal (attorney-general) and two members of the Court of Justice, the pieces had their face value stamped upon them. This operation at an end, the dies were replaced in the box,

which was carefully fastened and sealed with the seal of the governor and also that of the Court of Justice and replaced in the Colonial Secretary's office. The newly stamped pieces, however, were not ready for circulation until certain signatures had been added to them. All the pieces of each denomination were signed by three high officials, different officials being appointed for the different denominations. On the note in the illustration the signatures are those of P. J. Truter, fourth member of the Court of Justice, A. V. Bergh, president of the Orphan Chamber, and G. E. Overbeek, the collector of tithes. The money when quite finished was handed over to the receiver-general, who then exchanged it for a further quantity of damaged notes.<sup>1</sup> The destruction of the paper money took place in the courtyard of the Castle. When a sufficient quantity had accumulated to render the measure necessary, the fiscal, the deputy commissary-general, two members of the Court of Justice and two members of the Burgher Senate met at a date appointed by the governor at the Revenue Office, situated then within the Castle. The notes, having been carefully examined, were burnt in the yard just outside the office. If this examining and burning could not be finished in one day, these officials had to meet and continue the work at intervals so as to complete it in the shortest possible time.

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As soon as the turmoil in the West, consequent upon the change of Government, permitted attention being turned to the East, measures were adopted for extending the new *régime* to these parts. All the Batavian officials in the West had been replaced by either Englishmen or Colonial Dutch who had served under the former British rule. The last of the Dutch officials to be replaced was Captain Alberti, the Batavian commandant at Fort Frederick and acting landdrost of Uitenhage. To succeed him, Sir David Baird, on February 14th, 1806, appointed Captain Jacob Glen Cuyler, an officer on whose judgment and conciliatory temper reliance could be placed, and who had the additional qualification of a knowledge of the Dutch

<sup>1</sup> These renewals took place in 1806 twice, 1807 once, 1808 twice, 1809 three times, 1810 seven times, 1811 four times, 1812 four times, 1813 three times, 1814 three times, 1815 six times, 1816 six times, 1817 three times, 1818 three times, 1819 seven times, 1820 six times, 1821 eight times, 1822 nine times, 1823 seven times, 1824 six times, *i.e.*, ninety times in nineteen years or an average of nearly five times per annum.

CHAP. VI. language. Captain Cuyler was instructed to use every endeavour to discourage ill-treatment of Hottentots and Kaffirs by the Boers ; to create a friendly understanding with the Kaffirs,—the customary messenger with presents was to be sent to Cungwa ; and the Hottentot soldiers, who had served under the late Government, were to be induced, though not against their inclination, to transfer their service to the Hottentot Corps which was being organised, or perhaps rather re-organised, by Major John Graham of the 93rd Regiment.<sup>1</sup> With reference to the mission Hottentots, “the Rev. Mr. Vanderkemp and his society of Christian Hottentots are particularly recommended to your protection ; you will upon all occasions give this venerable and good man every assistance in your power. You must however listen to his account of the ill-treatment of the Hottentots and of the cruelty of the Boers with precaution. An enthusiast in his mission, he occasionally must see things in a stronger point of view than they are in reality.” After a passage of twenty-two days, Captain Cuyler arrived in Algoa Bay about the middle of March. Captain Alberti afforded every facility to the new commandant in taking over the command, and properly and ungrudgingly gave advice and information concerning the district. In pursuance of his instructions, Captain Cuyler, with the least possible delay, assembled the haemraaden together with as many of the inhabitants as possible and administered the oath of allegiance to his Britannic Majesty. In making himself acquainted with the conditions and requirements of the district, he found Fort Frederick, the blockhouse and the other military buildings connected with it, much in need of repair, nothing having been done to them during the Batavian occupation. There were very few stores and no flour. At Uitenhage (called, at that date, Uitenhagen by the British for some unknown reason) he found the unfinished Drostdy House, and the first attempts which had been made to establish the township. The further development of this place became one of the objects to which Captain Cuyler devoted much attention and energy. As a means of attracting and settling a population, Sir David Baird authorised Captain Cuyler to grant plots of land to individuals on their undertaking to

<sup>1</sup> Previously of the 59th.

erect, within a certain time, buildings of prescribed size and substantiality. This was so far successful that in 1810, 461 male inhabitants between the ages of fifteen and forty-five were reported as capable of bearing arms in defence of the place. Captain Alberti, before leaving the district, handed over Rds. 300, the balance of the first instalment of Rds. 12,500, which had been granted by the Batavian Government for the erection of the Drostdy House. The second instalment had not been received and, owing to the straitened financial condition of the Colony and the new needs which had arisen in the West, was not to be expected. Captain Cuyler, very shortly after entering upon his duties, succeeded in recovering rents upon the loan places to the extent of Rds. 2,314. This sum together with the aforesaid Rds. 300, he obtained permission to devote to the continuation of the building; and as there was some material prepared and on the spot there seemed to be some prospect of progress in the completion of the official headquarters of the district. A new difficulty, however, soon arose, namely, that of procuring labour, the reason for which will be dealt with farther on. By January, 1808, nearly four years after its commencement, the Drostdy House is described as being only a little more than half finished; the secretary's and messenger's houses and the jail were not even commenced. For the last indispensable institution a small clay house had done duty, from which a fairly sober prisoner might with but little trouble liberate himself at any time. In 1809 Uitenhage had so far struggled into existence as to warrant the inhabitants in moving for a church. They expressed themselves willing to contribute liberally and asked Government assistance. For this purpose it was proposed to levy a tax of one rix-dollar on each waggon-load of salt taken from the large salt-pan, situated at a short distance from the village. By 1810 the increasing number of houses necessitated regulations for the preservation of the water-course and the distribution of the water. Inhabitants were held responsible for the repair of the road and water-course passing their dwellings, and in the event of an individual being unable to do the work himself, he was obliged to pay some one else to do it. The whole arrangement was under the supervision of an overseer, who, in accordance with the



CHAP. custom, was not paid in money, but enjoyed certain privileges  
VI. and immunities.

The change of affairs at the Cape also materially affected the progress of Graaff Reinet at that date. The various contemplated improvements had, for a time at least, to be abandoned. The buildings already erected were falling into disrepair and additional ones were badly wanted. The total revenue of the district was about £300 per annum for all purposes, hence little could be done unassisted.

In the attempt to procure the necessary labour for building the Drostdy House at Uitenhage, the friction and trouble which had begun between Captain Alberti and Dr. Vanderkemp was re-commenced between that missionary and Captain Cuyler, and the charges of oppression and cruelty to the natives which had been brought against the Batavian Government were then about to be levelled against the new Government with greatly increased violence. As has been pointed out, the inhabitants generally were liable to be called upon to contribute some exertion in furthering the public welfare, either by acting personally, or by allowing their slaves and paid Hottentots to work in the public cause. This can scarcely be regarded as a hardship on those servants as they were provided with rations either by the Government or by the district, and though they received no pay from those sources, they did from their proper masters. Hence the tax in these cases really fell upon the employers, who, while paying their servants, were for a time deprived of their services. To obtain labourers to carry on the public works at Uitenhage, Captain Cuyler, in accordance with custom, looked to the field-cornets and farmers for assistance. In April, 1807, he sent to one of the field-cornets, instructing him to visit the farms with a view of procuring six Hottentots to work for one month in Uitenhage, and at the expiration of that time to find six others who should relieve them and work for a like period. In due course the field-cornet reported that very few Hottentots were available, as the greater number had left the farms and had gone to Bethelsdorp "enticed (particularly those with cattle) through the arts and insinuations of Mr. Vanderkemp, to the great injury of the inhabitants of the country".<sup>1</sup> With some difficulty, the field-cornet eventually

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Cuyler to Colonial Secretary, April 8th, 1807.

induced one of the farmers to allow two Hottentots, Solomon and Campher, to comply with the landdrost's request. These two men left the farm, but instead of going to Uitenhage went to Bethelsdorp, and were there detained by Dr. Vanderkemp. Major<sup>1</sup> Cuyler, in official, though perfectly polite and deferential terms, applied to the missionary for these men as well as four others to contribute a month's work at the Drostdy House. In angry language Dr. Vanderkemp refused. He contended that the farmer alluded to, like all others, never spoke the truth and that the two Hottentots in question really belonged to the "Institution". Further, he threatened to lay the case before his Excellency the Governor, "who (I am certain)," he continued, "will not approve of the Institution being treated as a district in a Field Cornetcy and its members as servants of the Boers". He accused Major Cuyler of irritating the Hottentots and of siding with their oppressors, and ended, "should you unhappily continue to countenance tyranny, it would be criminal in me to be longer silent". Shortly after this, another field-cornet, Van Rooyen, succeeded in procuring six Hottentots for the public service. Only three of them arrived in Uitenhage. One ran away to the "school" while the other two were intercepted by Dr. Vanderkemp and told by him that they need not obey the instructions which they had received. Major Cuyler felt compelled to bring all this, as well as Dr. Vanderkemp's conduct generally, before the notice of the Government. "It is totally impossible," he said, "I can be answerable for the tranquillity of this important part of the Colony while so lawless and turbulent a character, who has so much influence with the savage nations, is suffered to act as he pleases." Writing to the Colonial Secretary on May 31st, 1807, Major Cuyler stated that he had endeavoured to maintain amicable relations with Bethelsdorp "in having shown Mr. Vanderkemp and the Institution every attention in my power, and continued to do so long after I discovered his haughty and turbulent disposition, which cannot brook to be under any subjection to any person or any Government, at least as far as my slender ability can judge his conduct. I was not long here

<sup>1</sup> Landdrost Cuyler, though acting only in a semi-military capacity, was promoted to the rank of major at the end of 1806.

CHAP. VI. when the unfortunate murder of Grobbelaar took place, and the conduct of Mr. Vanderkemp on that occasion, I was compelled to submit through you to His Excellency, Sir David Baird. I hope I will be credited when I say that no personal or private pique induced me to make the report on the 8th ultimo, which I had the honour to forward to you for His Excellency, the Lieutenant-Governor's information, but my public situation in the principal Magistracy in this District compelled me to report Mr. Vanderkemp's insubordinate conduct. . . . From the conversations I have had with the Haemraaden and the best informed inhabitants of this district, I cannot imagine at present that Mr. Vanderkemp's presence in this quarter is in any way essential to the tranquillity of this part of the Colony, and the Colony was never more quiet than during the time he was banished hence." The missionary on his part communicated with Government in letters of great length, denying the allegations which were made against him and bringing counter-charges against the landdrost. In a letter dated May 20th, 1807, he said: "I and the other missionaries have always endeavoured to be on friendly terms with Major Cuyler, but very soon discovered that there was no sense of justice in his mind regarding the Hottentots, and the Boers, taking advantage of this, have fed the fire of discord. His last injustice," referring to the Hottentots being called upon to work at the Drostdy House, "being so notorious, contrary to every appearance of justice and even common sense, I have been under the disagreeable necessity to bring it by my former letter of April 30th to His Excellency's cognizance. If I had attempted to secure young men for military service by false representations, coercion or intoxication, the Major would have applauded my zeal, but he is neither a recruiting sergeant nor a slave driver." An additional cause of irritation and offence laid to the charge of Major Cuyler at this date was his refusal to acknowledge a marriage ceremony which Dr. Vanderkemp had performed on behalf of one of his fellow-missionaries. Authority had been given to the doctor to perform marriages among the Hottentots of the Institution, but not among the white inhabitants or the slaves. The missionary F. G. Ulbricht brought the matter before Government by the following communication :—

"BETHELSDORP, May 10th, 1807.

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"SIR,

"Having contracted a marriage with a baptized member of this Institution, and of the Hottentot nation,<sup>1</sup> and requested the Landdrost, Major Cuyler, to register and proclaim the bands [*sic*] thereof, the Landdrost has declared, that he finds himself not authorized to gratify me in this respect, on account of my being a native of Europe. . . .

"(Signed) F. G. ULBRICHT."

As time went on, the conflict between missionary and local authority made the management of the district increasingly difficult. Not only did the Government of the Colony itself eventually become involved, but, in after years, the discord now taking its rise developed into consequences of national importance, necessitating the expenditure of vast sums of British money and the sacrifice of hundreds of valuable lives. There can be no doubt that Mr. Vanderkemp acted upon his own initiative and maintained his position and quarrel uninfluenced by the public opinion of either the Colony or England. His predisposition to retirement and study must acquit him of any charge of desiring, by his devotion to the Hottentot, to insinuate himself into public notice or to court public approval. It is conceivable that, with a more evenly balanced judgment, he would have realised that his conduct tended to wreck the measures he was so anxious to promote. Beyond ignoring or opposing the Government of the Colony, he did not interfere in political matters or go out of his way to stir up further strife by appealing to the sympathy and co-operation of a larger public as he might easily have done. Fortunate would it have been for the Eastern Province in particular and South Africa in general, had those who took up Dr. Vanderkemp's work after his death, done no worse. At that time little or nothing was known in England concerning the real circumstances and conditions of life in South Africa. Moreover, the British public mind was becoming engrossed with those sentiments and schemes which ultimately led to the abolition of slavery with its attendant horrors. It is not surprising therefore that a too ready credence was given to any tale emanating from a distant

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, Ulbricht himself was taking a Hottentot for his wife.

CHAP. VI. land, in which the white man was represented as the oppressor of the black. In England there soon came into existence a prevailing tendency to regard the majority of the white inhabitants of Cape Colony, whether of English or Dutch descent, as lost to all sense of justice and humanity—missionaries alone being imbued with any feeling of philanthropy—and the blacks as the innocent and harmless victims of constant oppression. Hence it was no difficult matter for an interested or prejudiced individual, who appeared to speak with some authority on South African matters, to gain the public ear, and by misrepresentations, intentional or unintentional, to raise himself into prominence at the expense of those who were faithfully discharging duties often harassing and difficult in a far distant part of the Empire. The statements of political missionaries came to be believed in preference to those of the highest and best informed officials in the Colony, and were, unfortunately, acted upon. Thus, in a measure, Downing Street became subordinate to Exeter Hall. Through a long series of years the principal results of the machinations of pseudo-philanthropists were the devastation of the Eastern Province by assegai and firebrand, the driving forth of thousands of the Dutch inhabitants to seek new homes in distant and unknown lands, the almost total alienation of sympathy in the homeland from those who had gone out to found new homes in South Africa, and the establishment of measures which shocked the sense of natural justice and lacked the support of any considerations of sound policy.

During the latter part of the Batavian rule, the Eastern Province farmers enjoyed a distinct lull in the worry and anxiety consequent upon Kaffir visitations. In the sub-district of Brintjes Hooghte, whither, on account of its proximity to Kaffirland, the attention of robbers was usually first directed, and where also the bushy and mountainous character of the country rendered the pursuit of thieves difficult, the total loss of property during the whole of the year 1805 was only five horses and sixty-two oxen. This comparative quiet may have been due partly to the quarrels between the tribes which diverted their attention from the Colony, and partly to the constant vigilance which Captain Alberti had displayed. He visited regularly, three or four times in each year, the Kaffirs who lived on the west of the Fish River, and also made an annual visit to

Gaika. By this means he gained some knowledge of their affairs besides impressing the natives that they were being watched. This state of things, however, seems to have ended when Major Cuyler assumed authority, for the losses in Bruintjes Hooghte for the first three months alone of 1806 were twelve horses and eighty-nine oxen. He had been in office scarcely a month before he was initiated into the peculiar and harassing duties of a landdrost of Uitenhage in the stormy days. At the beginning of April, the farm of one Christoffel Botha, situated about five hours from Algoa Bay, was attacked by Kaffirs and the whole of the cattle driven off. Contrary to the regulations, Botha, without informing and without receiving permission from the field-cornet, set off immediately and succeeded in recapturing every head of the stolen stock and shot four of the thieves in doing so. About a week afterwards, namely on April 8th, the Kaffirs, in larger numbers, returned and attacked another farm not far distant from Botha's, murdered a Boer named Nicolaas Grobbelaar and got away with forty-eight oxen.<sup>1</sup> Following the usual custom, the landdrost issued instructions to the nearest field-cornets to assemble as many farmers and Hottentots as possible and to go in pursuit. Application for assistance was also made to Bethelsdorp. It was on this occasion when Major Cuyler met with his first rebuff from Dr. Vanderkemp and began to realise how little co-operation he might expect from that source. The assistance asked for was at first refused, on the ground that it was inconsistent with the religious character of the Institution that the Hottentots there assembled should be employed on any such service. In the end, however, some of them joined the commando. The expedition was a failure. The delay caused by acting in accordance with the prescribed regulations in such cases, gave the marauders the best opportunity for escape. Appeal was then made to Ndhambi and Cungwa, who professed themselves willing to assist, and promised to "punish

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<sup>1</sup> The following is an extract from a letter written by the distressed wife on this occasion, in appealing to some friends for assistance in her defenceless condition. "Oh God, my dear friends, come and help me. My Son-in-law, Nicolaas Grobbelaar, has been killed by the Kaffirs, and my husband's left arm broken with kerries, and forty-eight beeves taken away. I have no boards nor nails to make a coffin. My dear friends, come to help me, as God came to help me last night, else my whole family would have been killed."

CHAP. VI. the offenders to death" when they were caught, but nothing further was done. Thus the loss had, as was usual in those days, to be borne with what fortitude the unhappy farmer could command. Further experience of Kaffir chiefs taught that very little reliance could be placed upon their word and disapproval of such proceedings. There was indeed good reason to suspect that they were connected with or cognisant of every big robbery which was committed. From this time onwards the attitude of the Kaffirs became more and more daring and indicated less fear of the possible consequences of their actions. The disposition to further encroachment towards the West also increased, and the continued acts of conciliation and leniency undoubtedly encouraged them in the idea that such a move might be made with impunity. Ndhlabi's people were gradually ousting the remaining Zuurveld farmers, and adding to their own increasing herds all cattle not carefully watched. In one instance, a Boer named Oosthuisen was driven from a loan place on which he had expended Rds. 300, and on which 5,000 head of Kaffir cattle were soon grazing. In September, 1807, Cungwa, heedless of the authority of field-cornet and landdrost, left the Bushman's River district, and migrating beyond Algoa Bay established eleven or twelve kraals on the lands along the Van Staaden's River. A sub-tribe under the chief Habana, a nephew of Ndhlabi, had migrated even farther to the West. Taking a northerly route they proceeded beyond the limits of both Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet and settled down, in October, 1808, on the Gamka River, near the site of the present town of Prince Albert. The reports from the various field-cornets were very disquieting and plainly indicated the spirit of restlessness which was rife among the Kaffirs as well as the increasing anxiety of the white inhabitants. Armed Kaffirs were reported to be roving about in tens and twenties, begging for food and stating that, "If the people do not give us victuals, we must make ourselves masters of their table,"—threats which in some cases seem to have been carried into effect. In May, 1808, the field-cornet Erasmus reported a slave murdered and twenty-five oxen taken. In June over a hundred head of cattle were taken in twelve days and two Hottentots killed. Landdrost Stockenstrom, writing to Government on October 19th, said, "they [the Kaffirs] have a great opinion

of themselves and think that the friendliness and moderation shown them are signs of fear. . . . The roving Kaffirs continue to steal, and when told they are not allowed to wander about, point to their ears, meaning to say they are deaf to representations of that nature; others say they will go to the Cape to know from the Governor himself when any of his orders prohibited them from strolling about as friends." On December 24th the Boer Pieter van Wyk and his Hottentot servant were both murdered by Kaffirs and all the horses and oxen driven off. The farmer had been stabbed with an assegai in eight places and his head battered with knobkerries.

The occupation by Kaffirs of the Kweek Valley, in the present Prince Albert district, threatened to be a serious matter for Cape Town and the West, as that place was on the main route, along which the butchers drove the cattle from the interior to the capital. De Beer, the field-cornet of the Kweek Valley, reported the attitude of the invaders as menacing and pointed out that little could be done to oppose them. Food had been demanded with uplifted assegais and waggons had been stopped and looted. In answer to expostulations the Kaffirs were reported to have said, "We will wait and see what you can do," and gave other indications of readiness to fight.

The Hottentot location on the lands along the Gamtoos River, which had been granted to David Stuurman, had been a source of irritation from the beginning. Hottentots, who had broken their contracts with their masters, as well as other idlers and bad characters, congregated there and were practically under no other control than that of David Stuurman himself. Considering the distance of this location from the boundary of the Colony and the gradual spreading of the Kaffirs, many of whom were being harboured there, taking also into account the inadequacy of the police or military force to cope with the increasing disorder, it is easy to see how it became a source of actual danger. There was reason to believe that Stuurman was encouraging natives thither with a view to strengthening his position and confirming his independence, and later there was evidence to prove that he was forming an offensive and defensive alliance with Cungwa for the purpose of making another combined attack upon the Colony. Cungwa



CHAP. VI. with many of his people, it will be remembered, occupied lands on the Van Staaden's River at no very great distance from the Gamtoos. To eliminate this danger, it was decided to arrest Stuurman on this charge and to break up the location entirely. When the party arrived to take him, having collected a number of his people together, he threatened to fire on any one who attempted to approach him. As his desperate and violent character was well known, there was no reason to doubt but that he would be as good as his word on this occasion. The party therefore withdrew. Stuurman was then ordered to appear before the landdrost, but did not obey. His arrest by force being a dangerous proceeding, recourse was had to stratagem. On some friendly pretence, he was enticed to a distant house of one of the Boers, and at a moment when off his guard he was successfully seized. He was sent to Cape Town and tried before the Court of Justice, was found guilty and sent as a prisoner to Robben Island. Shortly after, he managed to escape to the mainland and made his way to Kaffirland. In 1816 he appeared again in his old haunts and was re-arrested and kept in close confinement until 1823, when he was transported to New South Wales.<sup>1</sup>

In consequence of the greater distance of Graaff Reinet from the haunts of Ndhlabi and the chiefs associated with him, that district did not suffer to the same extent from Kaffir

<sup>1</sup> An account of this affair was written some years afterwards by Mr. Thomas Pringle and published in the *New Monthly Magazine* for January, 1828. Though the facts were stated as above, the interpretation put upon them and the motives ascribed to the authorities, who were called upon to act in the emergency, conveyed to those who knew nothing of South African matters very erroneous ideas and served to increase the obloquy which at that time, under the name of philanthropy, it was the custom to heap upon the heads of the unfortunate inhabitants of the Eastern Province. The sole reason represented for the dislodgment of these people was, though harmless and inoffensive, disapproval on the part of the colonists of Hottentots enjoying independence. They are said to have been jealously watched with a view to finding some pretext of rooting them out and obtaining their lands. The one which furnished the opportunity is alleged to have been Stuurman's refusal to deliver up to the landdrost two Hottentots who had fled to him for protection from masters who endeavoured to retain their services after the expiration of the contract time. Stuurman is reported to have undergone "some sort of trial" "upon the evidence furnished by his mortal enemies" and to have been sent to Robben Island. "The unhappy exile" escaping was apprehended by "his old persecutors" and sent to New South Wales. "Such was the treatment and the fate of the last Hottentot chief who attempted to stand up for the natural rights of his countrymen."

depredations as Uitenhage; there was, however, the compensating trouble arising from Bushmen, more especially in the North. At that period these wild people seem to have been migrating from more distant parts and congregating in the Bamboes and Stormberg Mountains. Their ravages, which increased in frequency towards the end of 1808, seemed to be actuated more by a spirit of wanton mischief than by the desire to possess other people's property. In November, 1806, the Hottentot postman in making the first stage of the route to Cape Town was assailed by a shower of poisoned arrows and killed. Cattle and sheep were now and again found killed or maimed, without any apparent intention of using the carcasses as food. Early in 1808 Landdrost Stockenstrom sent out a commando under the field-commandant, Van Wyk, to dislodge the Bushmen, "observing all possible humanity" in the necessary proceedings. The commando shortly returned, without having fired a single shot, but having driven the enemy to a distance. Little time elapsed, however, before they were as troublesome as ever. The landdrost himself therefore decided to go forth and in a kindly spirit to treat with them for peace. In July, 1808, he collected the available force from his district and set out. The commando consisted of about fifty men; they were provided with beads, tobacco, and dagga and were accompanied by three friendly Bushmen. Mr. Stockenstrom had hoped to have been reinforced by a contingent from Uitenhage, but that district having its own troubles, only five men insufficiently equipped arrived at the rendezvous on the Fish River. On arrival at the mountains, the commando divided into two parties. The landdrost with about twenty-five men directed their course along the southern side of the Stormberg Range, while the other half of the commando under two experienced burghers named Van der Walt went along the northern side. The journey was extremely unpleasant. Not only was there much suffering on account of the cold, but there had been much rain previously which made the rivers difficult to cross and in other ways impeded the progress of the waggons. Very few Bushmen were seen, though they were known to be hiding in the difficultly accessible parts of the mountains. The friendly Bushmen were sent in search of them and many were found, but no promises

CHAP. or offers of presents could induce them to come forth. Mr.  
VI. Stockenstrom's party pushed on as far as the Tsomo River, probably in the vicinity of Xalanga. In those parts one kraal composed of Tambookies and Bushmen was discovered. They at first fled, but afterwards summoned up sufficient courage to meet Mr. Stockenstrom. He told them that if they came in an open manner and asked for what they wanted, they would be provided with as much as possible, but that, if they did not abandon the mode of living and the thieving habits which they had hitherto adopted, they would have themselves only to blame if they were pursued and shot. Having accomplished this, they returned and met the Van der Walts' party, which had not effected much. On approaching the only kraal which they had come upon, they had met with a volley of poisoned arrows and several Bushmen had been shot. Journeying together for some distance, the commando was disbanded.

The continual worry and fear for life and property were producing a state of great despondency among the white inhabitants. The regulations which had to be observed in their relations with the Kaffirs seemed to have been framed with a view to permitting the natives to rob them with impunity. When Major Cuyler arrived in the district, following his instructions, he issued orders forbidding the farmers to set out in immediate pursuit of stolen cattle. In case of theft, they were to report the loss to the nearest field-cornet, or some other official, who was authorised to call, or rather order, out a party of other farmers to go on commando. There were restrictions as to how far such a party might go beyond the last habitation, and instructions regarding the negotiations with the chiefs for the recovery of the cattle. All this operated entirely to the encouragement of further depredations. Nothing was said about the punishment of the thieves beyond reporting to a chief that thefts had been committed. The worst, therefore, that could befall the Kaffirs in a marauding expedition was, that they might be overtaken and lose their booty. They were in no fear of their lives as the regulations forbade firing upon them except in self-defence. Hence, from their point of view, such attempts were well worth making. The farmer, on the other hand, even if completely successful in a tiring journey of perhaps several days, merely got back his own without any

compensation for loss of time and needless trouble. The chance of recovery, however, was small, for the time occupied by the field-cornet in riding from farm to farm in order to collect a commando was more than sufficient to allow the Kaffirs to get their spoil into a place of safety and perhaps into regions which the regulations prohibited the pursuing party from entering. Captain Cuyler eventually realised the injustice of these limitations. In writing to the Colonial Secretary on July 4th, 1809, he "earnestly entreated that more forcible measures might be taken to protect the unfortunate colonists". "The existing laws, not allowing Kaffirs to be fired at but in self-defence, do not and cannot protect the property of the farmers, who have so materially suffered at the hands of the savages that I almost began to dread that in a short time their affection would be estranged from His Majesty's Government. The Kaffirs commit their outrages with confidence and impunity and defy the feeble attempts made to take them alive." To obviate all risk of offence being given to the Kaffirs, the farmers were forbidden either to employ them or to hold any communications whatever with them. In case of any visiting a farm and remaining more than an hour, the fact had to be reported immediately under a penalty of Rds. 500 for neglecting to do so. Following the example of his predecessor, Major Cuyler visited the Kaffirs in their strongholds, though this does not seem to have been done with the same frequency and regularity as previously, and most certainly not with the same happy results. In December, 1806, he journeyed across the Fish River and made his first acquaintance with Gaika and heard that chief's version of his differences with his uncle. The numerous reports of runaway slaves having taken refuge among the followers of Ndhlabi necessitated a personal interview with that chief. On February 25th, 1808, the landdrost held a formal conversation with him at his location in the Bushman's River district. Ndhlabi was told that it was the desire of the Christian nation to be at all times friendly with him, and it was hoped that he, in like manner, would entertain the same desire towards the colonists. He (Major Cuyler) was quite sure that Ndhlabi did not permit his people to steal, though such acts were committed by Kaffirs whose identity could not be established. His great captain (the

CHAP. Governor of the Colony) had, at length, allowed the farmers to  
VI. fire on thieves in the act of stealing, and should it happen that any of Ndhlabi's people were killed in this way, the chief himself must not be displeased at it. Ndhlabi in answer said: "I am happy to hear you talk in the way you do, and what you have said is right. It has always been my wish that rogues who steal the Christians' cattle should be shot in the act, if possible, and I am glad to find your Governor will allow you to do so, and when the rogues are shot, we may then see to what Kaffir captain he belongs and no one will then be blamed unjustly, and you have done well in acquainting me with these orders." Major Cuyler then complained of Cungwa's conduct in roving in districts so far distant from the Sunday's River, and causing such annoyance among the white inhabitants. Ndhlabi was asked to use his influence with that chief in order to induce him to retire within his own boundaries. Ndhlabi answered that he had already spoken to Cungwa with reference to re-crossing the Fish River, but that chief had replied, "he was in these parts before the Christians and would not withdraw". "Cungwa also is a great captain, so you had better talk to him yourself on the subject." With reference to the runaway slaves being harboured among his people, of which fact there was clear evidence, Ndhlabi denied all knowledge. They might be there, he said, but if so they never allowed him to see them. The subject of Habana and his misdeeds was then introduced. Habana was also a captain, said Ndhlabi, and if Cuyler had any complaints on his account, he had better make them known to Habana himself. Cuyler: "Is not Habana your nephew? and would you like to hear that from his misconduct I should be obliged to order him to be shot?" Ndhlabi: "No, I should not like to hear of Habana being killed, but he must know himself what he does". On the whole, Major Cuyler did not gain much by this interview; nor in fact did any one else on such missions to Ndhlabi. Cautious and crafty, his sparing answers were mostly either ambiguous or untrue, and not infrequently he elicited more information from his questioner than he gave. In the following June, another visit was paid to Gaika, who was then found to be in great distress, all his kraals having been destroyed by fire, nearly all his cattle

driven off and he himself taking refuge in the mountains. The explanation of all this devastation was that his uncle Ndhambi had been touring the country in quest of lost cattle. Gaika begged Major Cuyler to intercede with Government on his behalf.

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While these affairs were taking place in the East, changes in the government of the Colony occurred in the West. The home authorities considered that it was more expedient that a civilian of high rank, rather than a military officer, should be at the head of the Colonial Government. Sir David Baird was therefore not suffered to remain long in power, despatches containing his recall leaving London on July 26th, 1806. But besides this he had given dissatisfaction in detaching, without permission or authority, a large proportion of the military force at Cape Town,—in addition to diverting troops on their way to India,—for the purpose of attacking the Spanish possessions on the River La Plata. The new governor was an Irish peer, Du Pré Alexander, second Earl of Caledon, a young man of considerable energy and ability. He arrived in Cape Town on May 21st, 1807. Major-General George Henry Grey, of the 21st Light Dragoons, had preceded him and took the office of Lieutenant-Governor on January 17th, thus relieving Sir David Baird, who sailed for England on the following day.

The new governor was not long in discovering that the most difficult part of his administration was that connected with the various phases of the native question. Like many of the governors who succeeded him, he arrived in the Colony knowing little or nothing of its previous history, and had to initiate and carry out his own plans, for the most part unassisted by the experience of others. As a preliminary measure he despatched a Colonel Collins to travel through the disturbed areas and to gain information on which to base future action. Writing to Viscount Castlereagh on October 16th, 1809, he says: "Being anxious to suppress the system of predatory warfare which has at all times existed between the Colonists upon the Eastern frontier and wandering individuals of the Kaffir nation, yet fearing that any measures undertaken with this view without a previous knowledge of the actual state of affairs might rather lead me to error than accomplishment of my purpose, I determined to send Lieut.-Col. Collins through the

CHAP. districts of Graaff Reinet and Uitenhage. . . . I gave to  
VI. Col. Collins the title of His Majesty's Commissioner for the districts of Graaff Reinet and Uitenhage, as well for the purpose of giving him weight in a character known by experience to the people, as to enable him to exercise the authority of a Magistrate in assembling and embodying the farmers should circumstances require the adoption of measures beyond the ordinary reach of the Law."

In 1808 Colonel Collins commenced the duties which he had been commissioned to perform by journeying through the north-western parts of the Colony and investigating the relations which existed between the Bushmen and white inhabitants in those parts. From his own observations he accomplished little. Horse-sickness was prevalent, and drought prevented him from going far enough inland in order to meet with any large number of Bushmen. From the scattered farmers, however, he collected many complaints of losses of cattle and murders of Hottentot herds by these wild people. Returning to Cape Town, and remaining for a short time, he commenced the Eastern tour by going first to Graaff Reinet. On the way thither he met, at the farm of Samuel De Beer in the Kweek Valley, a youth, Andries Stockenstrom, who was also bound for Graaff Reinet. He was the son of the landdrost of that district and was on his way to join his father as a clerk. Colonel Collins became impressed with young Stockenstrom's abilities and invited him to accompany the expedition in the capacity of Dutch interpreter and secretary. The offer was accepted, and thus this young man, who was destined to play a prominent part in the future affairs of the Eastern Province, began his public career.

On January 23rd, 1809, the expedition left Graaff Reinet. The party consisted of Colonel Collins, Dr. Cowdery of the 83rd Regiment and Andries Stockenstrom junr., together with the usual waggon equipage and necessary attendants. As the intention was, in the first place, to explore the little known and lonely regions along the Orange River, the course was directed towards the rugged mountains of the Voor Sneeuwberg. Continuing to the north, Wolve Kop, the residence of the field-commandant, Johannes van der Walt, was reached on the 25th. This place is to the north of the present town of

Middelburg and at no great distance from Sherborne Station on the Rosmead-Naauwpoort line. At Van der Walt's the party was reinforced by thirty farmers who, on hearing of the expected arrival of Colonel Collins, had assembled there with the intention of accompanying him. Leaving there on the 27th, a journey of fifteen miles brought them to Carolus Poort and thence on to the farm of one Venter, probably the site of the present town of Venterstad. Pushing on until the 31st, they reached the banks of the Orange River, somewhere in the vicinity of Norval's Pont.

So far Colonel Collins was disappointed in the hopes he had entertained of meeting with Bushmen and discovering their haunts. The few which were met with here and there, far from exhibiting any fear of the travellers, seemed to be on friendly terms with the farmers who had joined the expedition, even approaching of their own accord and rendering small services, such as taking care of the oxen. Much rain, which had fallen previously, made it impossible to cross the river, and the journey was therefore continued along the bank in an easterly direction. Good sport was afforded by the number of hippopotami which infested the Orange River at that date. On February 3rd, a large river was discovered flowing from the north and pouring its waters into the Orange on the side opposite to that along which the party was travelling. As none of the farmers present knew its name, Colonel Collins called it the Caledon River, in honour of Lord Caledon, the name it now bears. Still following the course of the Orange River, and travelling through country which was found to be quite uninhabited, the Stormberg Spruit was crossed on the 7th. Passing then over the site of the future town of Aliwal North, another nameless river was discovered. This one flowed into the Orange from the south. Another name being required, Colonel Collins honoured the next in rank to the governor by calling this river the Grey, after Lieutenant-General G. H. Grey, the commander of the forces in Cape Town. That name has since become corrupted into Kraai, and at the present time the river is known as the Kraai River. The impossibility of crossing this river prevented any further eastward progress; the expedition therefore took a southerly direction towards the Stormberg Mountains. Beyond Bushman paintings in caves, no sign of human



CHAP. VI. life was anywhere met with in those parts. Passing near the site where Sterkstroom now stands, they reached "the first house we had seen during three weeks and the last on that side of the Colony". It was a place called Schaap Kraal, a little to the north of Tarkastad and in occupation by a Boer named Labuscagne. Continuing to the south, Twee Tafel Berg was passed on the 19th, when the Great Winterberg with its stupendous granite crown came into view. Colonel Collins, believing that, up to that date, no white man had visited it, turned his steps thither and ascended to the top. From the Winterberg, he travelled over the country to the west, crossing the Baviaan's River, and passing over the land near where Witmos Station now is, he arrived at the house of the field-cornet at Zwager's Hoek. Van der Walt and the burghers broke off from the party shortly after the departure from the Stormberg Mountains, hence a halt of some days was necessary at Zwager's Hoek in order to collect another escort for the farther journey into Kaffirland. During this time the Boschberg and Brintjes Hooghte were visited.

Preparations for a longer absence from civilisation having been made, Colonel Collins, now accompanied by the landdrost of Graaff Reinets, commenced the journey to Kaffirland. Retracing the path to Schaap Kraal, a party of thirty farmers with waggons and guides was there found in readiness and waiting to go forwards as an escort. On March 3rd the expedition crossed the boundary of the Colony. Proceeding in the direction of the present village of Shiloh, the route lay along the northern side of the Amatola Mountains to the Kabusi River, and thence to the White or Great Kei. The whole of the country traversed was quite uninhabited, though at that date was generally regarded as Bushman country. In order to avoid every risk of giving offence to the natives into whose territories they were about to enter, messengers were sent forward on the 12th to Hintsas, the paramount chief of all Kaffirland, to acquaint him with the object of the commissioner's visit and to obtain permission to cross into his country. On the 14th a favourable reply was received. It was thought inadvisable to pass through crowds of Kaffirs with the large following of waggons and armed Boers which constituted part of the expedition, so a small party on horseback, consisting

chiefly of the officials, twelve in number, crossed the Kei, the burgher escort remaining to take charge of the waggons. The country immediately beyond the Kei was found to be, comparatively speaking, thickly inhabited. Vast herds of fine cattle, flocks of goats, but no sheep, were at all times visible grazing on the distant veldt, and evidences of agriculture were afforded by the large patches of land on which Kaffir corn (amazimba) was growing. After a three hours' ride, and causing much curiosity and wonder among the numerous Kaffirs whom they met, Colonel Collins and his party arrived at the kraal of Booku, the brother and chief councillor of Hintsa. Friendly overtures were made by the visitors in presenting to the prominent people beads, buttons, and the usual trinkets, with which every such expedition was well supplied. The chief, on his part, reciprocated the friendly sentiments by ordering a bullock to be killed for the refreshment of the travellers. Booku is described as being "about twenty-four years of age; his countenance was rendered interesting by a good-humoured smile and a very fine set of teeth; his figure was tall and elegant, but, as well as his face, was rendered more like that of a Hottentot than of a Kaffir by being all over smeared with ochre. He wore no useful article of dress except a kaross made of leopard skin, which was suspended on his neck and covered one shoulder; one wrist was surrounded by copper wire, some beads hung from one ear, and others adorned an ankle." Booku was impatient "to hear the news"; that is, to learn the object of this visit. In due course a formal interview took place. In all matters concerning the politics of Hintsa and the tribes under him, Booku could not be induced to say anything. When asked about the rank of Hintsa as compared with that of Gaika and Ndhlabi, the simplicity and ignorance of the importance of the paramountcy displayed by such a question well-nigh overcame the councillor. Lifting up his outstretched arms in reverence and awe, he told them in the metaphorical language characteristic of the Kaffir, that Hintsa was the first man among the Amaxosa and that he was so great that when Gaika and Ndhlabi want fat (*i.e.* prosperous times and riches) they send to him for it. At the conclusion of the conference, the day was too far advanced to admit of journeying farther; a large hut about four-

CHAP. VI.    teen feet in diameter was therefore placed at their disposal for the night. A six hours' ride the next morning brought them to the residence of Hintsa. The "great place" or headquarters of that chief was for many years where the town of Butterworth now stands, but at the date referred to it was nearer the coast, in fact in sight of the sea and about midway between the Kei and Bashee Rivers. In accordance with what seems to have been the custom when important strangers visited a prominent chief, Hintsa was not at home,—was away hunting and would not return for some days,—so Colonel Collins was told. It was believed, however, that he was lurking in the immediate vicinity the whole time in order to be assured that nothing was to be feared from his visitors. In the absence of the great chief, the party was, nevertheless, hospitably treated. One of the objects of the expedition in travelling so far into Kaffirland was to ascertain whether any white people, fugitives from law and justice, were taking refuge in those parts, there being reasons for believing that such was the case. Further, it was hoped to enlist the co-operation of Hintsa in recovering such persons as well as to induce him to prevent others from seeking an asylum in his country. Instead of delaying this quest until the chief's return, the horsemen moved off towards the sea-shore and discovered some huts situated quite near the beach. One of the first people encountered was a white man, scantily clothed in very ragged European dress. He seemed greatly alarmed at the approach of the party, but was unable to avoid meeting it. In answer to the first question put to him, he spoke in Dutch, but with an accent which left little doubt as to his true nationality. He was one Henry MacDaniel, born in County Clare, who had deserted from the 8th Dragoons shortly after the arrival of that regiment in Cape Town during the former British occupation. Having made his way to Kaffirland, he had been kindly treated by Hintsa and had adopted Kaffir customs and wives. Associated with him, and following his example, was a Boer named Lochenberg who also had fled thither for safety in consequence of having been concerned in the earlier political troubles of the Colony. A pardon for all past offences was offered to them on condition of returning to civilisation, an offer which, at the time, was apparently accepted. On the next morning,

however, when the party was prepared to return to Hints's place, these men with their wives and children had fled. Messengers with reassuring promises were sent in search of them, but without success. Some runaway slaves also were discovered. They stated that the cruelty of their masters had compelled them to desert. On promise of full protection of the landdrost in future, they consented to return, but did not do so.

When the party again arrived at Hints's place, the chief himself was there; he was said to have returned from his hunt that morning. He is described as being tall and stout, though younger than Booku, and his manner distrustful, looking anywhere, when spoken to, but at the person who addressed him.<sup>1</sup> In the conversation which Colonel Collins had with him it transpired that he was on friendly terms with Gaika and Ndhlambi so long as they kept at a distance; but when asked whether he would have any objection to their residing nearer to his territories, but separated from them by the Kei, he answered, unhesitatingly, that should they approach so near, he would risk everything in endeavouring to drive them back. He did not entertain the same objection to Cungwa, who, it will be remembered, was no blood relation to Hints as the other two were. On the whole, Hints manifested every friendliness towards the Colony; he promised to assist both in sending back exiles and in preventing others from entering and taking refuge in his country. With mutual satisfactory understanding, the visitors took their leave of Hints and commenced the return journey. The chief furnished them with guides to conduct them to the mouth of the Kei, as Colonel Collins had expressed his desire to see that part of the country, but, perhaps misunderstanding their instructions, the guides conducted them back to the drift where they had crossed the river and where the burghers had been left in charge of the waggons. The next mission of importance was to interview Gaika; messengers were therefore sent forward to acquaint that chief with this intention. Retracing their path for some distance, the commissioner's party turned off from the original route and took a pathless course over the upper reaches of the

<sup>1</sup> "A very good-looking fellow, his face though black the very image of poor dear George IV." (Sir Harry Smith, *Autobiography*, vol. ii., p. 361).

- AP. 1. Nahoon and Buffalo Rivers, and experienced much difficulty in getting the waggon over the very rugged and thickly wooded country. Crossing the Keiskamma River where it was but a small stream, probably a little to the north of Keiskamma Hoek, they proceeded farther and shortly arrived at the place where Gaika desired to meet them and where a camp was formed. The chief drew near "in the centre of an irregular line of about a hundred men, who advanced with a slow pace and halted at thirty yards from our encampment". Gaika went forward and, accompanied by some of his *amapakati* or confidential advisers, entered the colonel's tent. Having, as a preliminary, put Gaika into a mood to listen to "the news," by handing to him a quantity of the usual presents, which he examined with manifest satisfaction, the objects of the mission were explained to him. He offered no objection to the field-cornets visiting his territories for the purpose of recapturing deserters, runaway slaves and others who had fled thither from the Colony. But in reply to the statement that in consequence of large numbers of his people visiting the Colony for the purpose of begging and stealing, the annoyance and loss to the inhabitants had been almost unbearable, he expressed regret that his people and the colonists could not meet as friends. He hoped the restriction as to begging might not apply to himself personally, as he was at that very time contemplating a friendly tour among the farmers for the purpose of procuring twenty head of cattle. He explained that he was about to add another wife to his household and that that number of cattle had been demanded as "lobola" or dowry. He was told that this could not be permitted, but in this special case, if he applied to the landdrost of Graaff Reinet, the number of cattle he desired should be supplied to him through an official channel. Gaika at this time was very poor. The inroad upon him which had been made by Ndhambi not long before had bereft him of all his cattle, except ten cows and a few oxen. It became most clear that, though Gaika was nominally chief over all the Kaffirs west of the Kei, he yet was one of the least powerful and exercised the smallest influence among the tribes. This being completely misunderstood by successive Government authorities, the mistake again and again was made of treating with him as a powerful ally and giving him an author-

ity over Ndhlabi and others which he was not able to maintain. In answer, almost obvious, to the question whether it was true that fear of him prevented the Zuurveld chiefs from recrossing the Fish River, he said that that was merely a pretext and that the Zuurveld answered their purpose so well that they would never vacate it until compelled to do so by superior force. Colonel Collins remained in his camp at that place two days. During that time Gaika frequently returned, obviously with the object of begging for whatever he could get, bringing forward some new topic of a frivolous character for discussion. Acting upon the promise he had received, he visited Landdrost Stockenström at Graaff Reinet on June 26th and remained until July 4th. He was accompanied by a wife, two minor chiefs and forty-two other followers, all of whom had to be hospitably treated while there. Besides the twenty oxen, he received two milch cows, clothes for himself and wife, necklaces, beads, looking-glasses, knives, handkerchiefs and a hat with gold tassels and feathers; then, perhaps anxious to foster and encourage that virtue of generosity in the Colonial authorities which he had always found so profitable in all his negotiations with them, he further demanded iron pots, horns and sundry other articles.

When Colonel Collins had accomplished all that was possible with Gaika, he had yet before him the most important and most difficult part of his negotiations with the Kaffirs, namely, that of visiting and ascertaining the sentiments of Ndhlabi, the real cause of all the native trouble. On leaving Gaika, the chief warned the colonel that such a proceeding was not without danger; and some time after the party had started Gaika despatched a messenger after them carrying the information that further confirmation of this opinion had been received by him.

The direction taken, after leaving the Keiskamma, was along the base of the Amatola and Winterberg Mountains, crossing the Kat, Kroome and Koonap Rivers to the Kaga River near the Kagaberg.

Turning then to the south, the journey was continued over the Fish River Rand to Commadagga. At that place the waggons were left in charge of some of the Boers, while the colonel with a small party of horsemen went on to the Zuur-

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veld. Near the Little Fish River eleven families of farmers, who shortly before had been obliged by Ndhlabi's people to leave their homes in the Zuurveld, were found collected together. They also expressed their concern for the safety of the party in venturing into those regions. Passing the Zwarteberg and proceeding to the Zuurberg Range, which was crossed, probably a little to the east of the present site of Alicedale, messengers were sent on to Ndhlabi, apprising him of the intended visit of the commissioner. Continuing south into the present district of Alexandria, they arrived at a temporary residence of Ndhlabi, situated about fifteen miles from the sea; his permanent residence at that time being about midway between the Bushman's and Sunday's Rivers. The chief was away, though in this case most certainly not on any account of fear of meeting his visitors. Ndhlabi at that date was the most powerful and richest of all the Kaffir chiefs, and though not the paramount in name, he was so in fact. On the arrival of Colonel Collins, one of the chief's sons went off immediately in search of his father and returned with him towards evening. The visitors had in the meantime formed their small camp at some distance from the chief's kraal. On hearing of his arrival the field-cornet, Stolz, was sent to invite Ndhlabi to talk with the commissioner at the camp fire. This was declined. The colonel had therefore to go and meet the chief at his own fire. The scene was an impressive and awe-inspiring one. The evening had far advanced and the full moon, across which fleecy clouds were scudding, intermittently illuminated a crowd of almost naked savages standing around their seated monarch. A forest of upright assegais, gleaming in the cold moonlight, together with the conviction that hundreds more of the chief's followers were among the mimosa bushes close at hand ready for any emergency, must have impressed the party with their helplessness in case of conflict.

Formal compliments having been exchanged, the colonel broached the usual topics. Ndhlabi expressed his regret and concern at the general movement of the farmers to greater distances from him, and was anxious that they should return to their abandoned homesteads. In proof of this, he mentioned that he had been out hunting and seeing the fear he caused, desisted and returned. In all this he was probably sincere, as

his shrewdness and foresight must have taught him that his own occupation of country in which he had no right was endangered by the continual alarm his proximity to the white inhabitants created. He was willing to discourage his people from going to beg among the farmers, but hoped that when he himself went they would receive orders to give him cattle. His demeanour throughout the interview seems to have been that of one who, conscious of his power, felt no need for compromise and stood in no immediate awe of the commissioner's authority. "Where are you from now?" "Where are your waggons?" "What business took you to Hintsä?" "Did you get what you wanted?" "What took you to Gaika?" "Have all my people been sent from the Colony?" By these and other questions he obtained more satisfaction from the interview than he gave.

Colonel Collins, complaining of one of Ndhambi's petty chiefs, who was at that time roaming about the Colony, asked that he might be ordered to return to his own territory. "Suppose he should refuse to obey me?" asked Ndhambi. "Well then," said the colonel, "you must know how to treat a disobedient vassal." "In this case, I shall do nothing," replied the chief. As a counter-grievance, he complained that two of his people who had gone "to take a walk" in the Colony, had a sheep given to them by a farmer, and while they were eating it, another farmer came across them and shot one of them. The colonel, stating that such misunderstandings and misfortunes were additional reasons for preventing his people from visiting the farmers, promised to investigate the matter, but said that he suspected the sheep had been stolen. An inquiry eventually made confirmed the suspicion. Finding no further advantage likely to accrue from a continuation of the conversation, some of the usual trinkets were presented to the chief and his immediate followers, and then Colonel Collins and his companions set off in the moonlight and travelled as far as the Sunday's River, where they arrived on the following morning. Having crossed the river, their course was directed for a short distance down the right bank until some kraals belonging to Cungwa were reached. This must have been a temporary residence of that chief as, at that date, his great place or "umzi" was situated about ten miles east of the Sunday's River and



CHAP. VI. near the sea at a spot in the present district of Alexandria, known to this day as "Congo's Kraal". On requesting to see Cungwa, he was said to be absent,—had gone to visit some relations who were living near Ndhlabi. The usual credit was given to this statement. It was far more probable that, if really absent, he was on a business tour in the more western parts of the Colony. Without further delay, the party continued the journey and, after a five hours' ride, arrived at the drostdy at Uitenhage on April 3rd.

As a practical result of the observations he had made on this journey, Colonel Collins in a lengthy report to Lord Caledon, dated August 6th, 1809, suggested a number of measures for the introduction and maintenance of a better state of affairs. Most of them, however, had been proposed before by every one who had undertaken to set the Eastern Province in order, but under the existing conditions had been found to be impracticable. That the Kaffirs should be compelled to return to their own country, and that all intercourse between them and the Colonists should be scrupulously avoided, were among the oft-repeated suggestions. He pointed out that the weakness of the frontier was due chiefly to the very large extent of the farms and the consequent scattering of the population. A line of 100 miles did not present a resistance of more than one-third of that number of inhabitants. It was therefore not to be wondered at, that it commanded little respect from a numerous people continually eager to extend their territories. To remedy this, he suggested a measure which a few years later was actually carried into effect, though not as a result of anything which Colonel Collins then said, namely, that settlers should be brought out from England to occupy, in small holdings, the land in the Zuurveld at the mouth of the Great Fish River.

The continued friction and reciprocal complaints between the landdrost of Uitenhage and the missionary at Bethelsdorp also formed a subject of investigation and inquiry by the commissioner. On April 6th, accompanied by the landdrost of both Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet, he visited the Institution. It was found to consist of a collection of huts built of straw, reeds and mud, no improvement on the squalid state in which Lichtenstein found it six years before having, apparently, been made. Residing there were 639 Hottentots, of whom sixty-

six were baptised and only forty-three exercised any useful trade.<sup>1</sup> They were being taught to read and write, but there was little evidence of attention having been paid to dress and personal cleanliness. In reporting upon this to Lord Caledon, Colonel Collins said: "I cannot therefore perceive that the effects produced by the zealous and unremitting labours of Dr. Vanderkemp and his brethren during a period of seven years are such as to promise great benefits from a continuance of this Institution, even to the members of it".

The land on which Bethelsdorp was established was very unsuitable for the purpose of such a mission. In the first place it was not large enough for the population which, nominally at all events, belonged to it, and secondly the very poor supply of water permitted of agriculture only on the smallest scale. It is a matter of surprise that the numerous cattle belonging to the people of the place were able to find sufficient food in the scanty pasturage of the barren surroundings. Attempts had, more than once, been made to remedy this state of affairs, by endeavouring to find a more favoured spot to which the Institution should be removed, but nothing satisfactory to Dr. Vanderkemp could be proposed. In 1807, Lord Caledon, anxious to promote the welfare of the Hottentots as well as to encourage Dr. Vanderkemp, authorised the landdrost of Swellendam in conjunction with a Mr. Rex to confer with the doctor with a view to re-establishing the mission near Plettenberg's Bay. They met at Mr. Rex's house on May 13th, 1808. Jackhal's Kraal was first offered and then two places on the Keurboom's River, but none of them met with approval. Dr. Vanderkemp seems to have been reluctant to move at all to the west of his position. His own energies were directed, not to the removal of Bethelsdorp, but to the extension of his boundaries. In the September following he petitioned Lord Caledon to bring this about by dislodging the neighbouring farmers and recompensing them from the Government Treasury for any loss thus incurred. In reply to his request, his Excellency said that he did not feel himself warranted in putting the public to any expense by purchases from the

<sup>1</sup> Actual numbers given in Dr. Vanderkemp's own report at the time of the visit were: 146 men, 211 women, 282 children—total, 639. Absent—113 men, 121 women, 106 children. Total belonging to the place, 979.

CHAP. adjacent farmers as suggested by Dr. Vanderkemp, though he  
VI. was anxious to promote his views, could it be done by the cession in loan of any land belonging to the Government. This could not be done, hence the congested and unsatisfactory state of this mission station continued. From a political point of view its proximity to the country occupied by the Kaffirs was, and not without reason, a constant source of suspicion and anxiety to the local authorities. Kaffirs frequented the Institution and the mission Hottentots often visited the Kaffirs on errands which were not above suspicion. It was obvious that no measure could be so conducive to peace between the Colony and the Kaffirs as that of completely preventing the one people from having any dealings, either direct or indirect, with the other. Dr. Vanderkemp, however, so far from realising this, applied, at the very time when steps were being taken to enforce it, for permission for his people to carry on an open trade in cattle with the Kaffirs, and when refused, for the reason given, considered this as further harsh and oppressive treatment of the poor Hottentot. The uncompromising attitude which characterised all his dealings with the authorities was well shown in his answers to Colonel Collins during the interview. "Will you, sir, agree to send over to Uitenhage, Hottentots whose services may be required by the magistrate, Major Cuyler?" To this Dr. Vanderkemp replied in the negative. Being requested to state the grounds on which he rested his objections, he remarked that to apprehend men as prisoners, and force them to labour in the manner proposed, was no part of his duty. To the question whether he did not consider it his duty to compel the Hottentots to labour, he replied: "No, sir, the Hottentots are recognised to be a free people, and the Colonists have no more right to force them to labour in the way you propose, than you have to sell them as slaves". Being asked why he would not obey the order of the landdrost in calling out the Hottentots who were among the farmers, "Because, sir," said he, "that is the duty of the landdrost himself, and he is paid for it". Asked if he would agree to prohibit the Kaffirs from visiting his Institution, and whether he would send such as might resort to him under the pretext of coming to seek instruction, as prisoners to Uitenhage, he replied: "Sir, my commission is to preach the Gospel to every

creature, and I will preach the Gospel to every one who chooses to hear me".<sup>1</sup> The result of this inspection was, that Colonel Collins recommended that Missionary Institutions for the instruction of the Hottentots should be limited to those already established by the Moravians, who had always done excellent work in a quiet and unobtrusive manner and had always given the support which is due from every community to the Government which protects it. In this same strain Lord Caledon reported to Viscount Castlereagh on October 16th, 1809. When Colonel Collins had made himself acquainted with the affairs of Bethelsdorp, and thus gained a fairly complete knowledge of the actual conditions of the Eastern Province, he left the frontier, and journeying through the south coast regions returned to Cape Town. The statement in his report concerning the relations which were believed to exist between the Bethelsdorp Hottentots and the Kaffirs was not without foundation. In September, 1809, the famous Hans Trompetter was arrested and sent as a prisoner to Cape Town. Like David Stuurman, he was a man of influence among the Hottentots and was one of the leaders in the rebellion of 1799. He afterwards became a "convert" at Bethelsdorp, but finding insufficient scope for his ability and enterprise there, and, perhaps, having imbibed the spirit of freedom which the missionary inculcated, he left, joined Ndhambi's people and assisted in the raids upon the farmers. Having stolen a gun and some cattle, he was captured by the field-cornet with the result already stated. About the same time also, the field-cornet, Erasmus, discovered a large party of Hottentots, who had been members of the Institution, but had left and joined the Kaffirs for purposes of plunder. The information acquired by the Government made it clear that, at no distant date, drastic steps would have to be taken in order to prevent the increasing disorder of the East from spreading all over the Colony. The gradual invasion and scattering of the Kaffir, and his growing contempt for all authority which had arisen out of the policy of conciliation, were but forebodings of the storm which, shortly after this date, broke over him and drove him completely from the Colony.

<sup>1</sup> *Vide Philip's Researches*, vol. i., p. 123.

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## NOTE ON THE HOTTENTOT CORPS.

In 1796, when General Craig was endeavouring to establish permanent peace and tranquillity, the problem of the management of the large number of wandering and discontented Hottentots presented itself. As these people, while in the service of the Boers, had become experienced in the use of the musket and had at various times acted in a loose kind of way as soldiers, the general conceived the idea of attaching them to his Majesty's Government by collecting together as many as possible, and, by the allurements of a multi-coloured uniform, rations and sixpence a week in cash, to induce them to become organised into a corps. Although it was hoped that this corps might be of service against the Boers of the interior, the principal motive actuating its creation was more the desire to obtain some control over them than to increase the military force of the Colony. Within six months about 200 were enlisted. The uniform in the first place consisted of a short scarlet jacket with yellow collar and cuffs and trimmed with a kind of white lace; blue cloth trousers with a black and red stripe and a round felt hat. The corps was placed under the command of a subaltern from one of the infantry regiments; it had its headquarters at Riet Vlei near Cape Town and was known as the Hottentot Corps. The Hottentots were found amenable to discipline, albeit there were predictions that as soon as they were clothed and accoutred they would desert and steal the property entrusted to their care. During the early troubles in Graaff Reinet the corps was in readiness for action, but their services were not required. At that time 147 more readily enlisted in the British service. In 1799, however, when the Hottentots as a whole misunderstood the intentions of the Government, suspicion infected the ranks and many of the corps deserted and joined the Kaffirs and rebel Hottentots. Under the Batavian rule, in consequence of the small regular force which Holland was able to maintain in the Colony, this native force was increased to 600. The uniform was then changed to blue with red facings. Sir David Baird highly approved of the corps and one of his first acts after his capture of the Cape was to take the necessary steps for encouraging and increasing it. Its further organisation and command were entrusted to Major John Graham of the 93rd. Sir David Baird pointed out to the Home Government the expediency of still further increasing the strength to 800 rank and file. In a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Hon. W. Windham, dated April 15th, 1806, the measure was approved. Officers were then sent into the different country

districts to seek the co-operation of the field-cornets in inducing the necessary number of Hottentots to enlist.

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With the change in command came also another change in the uniform. It was thought prudent to eliminate all attachment to and remembrance of the Batavian Government by discarding the red and blue worn in that service and replacing it by green with black facings, after the style of the English Rifle companies. The head-gear was a round felt hat with green tuft. The existence of this corps had ever been a matter of great offence to the Dutch inhabitants, especially those of the interior, who considered it a great insult that natives should be kept in readiness to act against them. But what was of really greater moment was the withdrawal of so many Hottentots from the possibility of working on the farms. This was felt all the more keenly at that date (1807), for in that year the labour market was affected by the abolition of the slave trade. When Lord Caledon became governor in 1807, he did not look upon this corps with such favour as his predecessors had done. He contended that Hottentots were useless in the ordinary garrison duties of the Cape, though they might be of service in the warfare peculiar to the interior and the frontier; but for this latter purpose a much smaller number than then constituted the corps would suffice. A further disadvantage to the Colony of the increased Hottentot Corps was, that as it was an irregular regiment, it could not be regarded as an establishment of the regular army and therefore the expense of its equipment and maintenance fell upon the Colonial Treasury. For these reasons Lord Caledon asked the Home Government to sanction its reduction to its original number, namely 350. This, however, does not seem to have been acted upon. The reduction was quite in unison with the general desire of the Colonists. Landdrost Stockenström writing to the Colonial Secretary, on July 17th, 1807, said: "Having been informed on my way up to Cape Town that another enlistment of Hottentots had taken place which might possibly extend itself as far as Graaff Reinet, I cannot but entreat your Excellency that this may be avoided as much as possible in the above-mentioned Drosty". The disadvantage advanced was that it would overthrow a salutary regulation relative to the registration of names of Hottentots in the service of the inhabitants, "whereby servants were secured to them for a fixed period and these were sure of their pay". When, during the governorship of Sir John Cradock, the Kaffirs were driven from the Zuurveld and Grahamstown became the military headquarters for these parts, the Hottentot Corps was further increased and its headquarters moved from Riet Vlei to Grahamstown. It was found necessary to augment the military and civil force (*commando*) by

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VI. driven over the Great Fish River by Colonel Graham, were continually  
endeavouring to regain their lost ground. Lord Charles Somerset,  
again, on the other hand, moved for its reduction to 500, which was  
carried out, and then finally it was disbanded altogether in 1817, and  
its place was taken by a new corps composed of Hottentots and mixed  
breeds known as the *Cape Corps*.

## CHAPTER VII.

### INFLUENCE OF BETHELSDORP IN MOULDING EASTERN PROVINCE HISTORY.

IT is a matter of considerable difficulty to arrive at the truth of much that has been written concerning the cruel and unjust treatment of the Hottentots by the Boers. With the exception of the statements made by the missionaries connected with Bethelsdorp, the evidential value of which will appear later, the accounts, generally vague, are either those of people who had never visited the Eastern Province—the theatre of the alleged horrible scenes—or those of hasty travellers who had not the opportunity, and probably not the inclination, to investigate the truth of the tales which they collected, perhaps from biased individuals.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> An example of a statement, condemnatory of the inhabitants, which emanates from an apparently authentic source, but which is, in the highest degree of probability untrue, is the following. It is taken from the *State of the Cape of Good Hope*, a book published anonymously in 1822, but written by Mr. Wilberforce Bird, the Comptroller of Customs in Cape Town. "So great was their (the Hottentots) terror of these barbarous masters, that it was in the dead of night, when unseen by their vindictive employers, they ventured to communicate their wrongs, and to implore the mercy of the governor, at that time on a journey through the frontier. The proclamation A (of November 1st, 1809) was the happy consequence of this application." This statement is of great importance, not only on account of the grave charge which is implied, but also owing to the fact that it has been published and republished, even as late as 1899, in missionary journals (*vide* Philp's *Researches in South Africa*, 1828, vol. i., p. 146; also *History of the London Missionary Society*, published in 1899, vol. i., p. 545). There can, of course, be no question that Mr. Bird wrote what he believed to be true; but had he taken a little trouble to investigate it, it would most probably have been found to be without foundation in fact. The last sentence of the above quotation shows that Lord Caledon is the governor referred to. Now, in the manuscript documents in the Archives in Cape Town, in the Proclamations and in the Government Gazette of the time, there is no mention of the governor having made such a journey to the frontier; involving as it would have done a long absence from Cape Town, there would certainly have been some communication written from the frontier, or some intermediate place, from the governor himself; but nothing of this nature seems to be in existence. Further, the statement of this journey is negated by the fact that, in order to learn what was the state of affairs in the East, he despatched Colonel Collins on the tour of 1808 and 1809. If, therefore, the governor never made this journey, the value of the statements concerning the "terror of the barbarous masters" and others is obvious.



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In the cases—and they were not a few—which in the year 1812 became the subjects of minute judicial investigation, the greater number of alleged horrors were found to be either wholly untrue or grossly exaggerated. That the Boer did not always behave to his Hottentot servant in the manner he himself would have wished to be treated, had the relations between them been reversed, is undoubtedly true. The Hottentots were naturally an indolent people and not disposed, even when free to act as they pleased, to exert themselves greatly on their own account. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, when they found themselves in the service of masters who, perhaps with justice, made greater demands upon their industry than they always complied with, that they brought the wrath of the Boer upon themselves and personal chastisement resulted. It cannot be denied that in some cases great brutality was exercised, but it is not easy to prove beyond doubt that this was so general as many would have us believe. In the latter days of the Company's rule, the scattered population was scarcely under any Government control, and the almost wild life that resulted from people being born and brought up in ignorance, produced those views of justice and humanity which might be expected under such circumstances. Yet, in spite of this, a commensalism did exist; each race, Boer and Hottentot, benefited by association with the other. Authentic records show that they fought side by side against their common enemies the Bushmen and Kaffirs, and that the Boer joined in expeditions for the recovery of cattle stolen from the Hottentot. The rising of the Hottentots against their masters in 1799, though usually represented as resulting from unbearable cruelties, was more probably due to a serving race taking advantage of the opportunities which the general disturbance seemed to offer of freeing themselves from the necessity of working, and of bringing about some condition of life more in accordance with their lazy habits.

As has already been stated, at the termination of that rebellion, General Dundas, impressed with the need of some organisation in the employment of Hottentots, formulated a code of regulations. In accordance with these, any Boer taking a Hottentot into his service had to do so with the cognisance of the landdrost or other official, and a register of all the

particulars of such agreements had to be kept at the drostdy in each district. By this means it was hoped both that the settlement of any subsequent disputes might be facilitated, and that good treatment to the Hottentots and fair and just labour to the farmer might be ensured. It was, in fact, the beginning of a masters and servants Act. The provisions then made were afterwards found to be open to abuse, and advantage was taken of this. Theoretically, the Hottentot at the expiration of the contract time was at liberty to leave the master, and with his wife, family and other belongings to seek another service, or if he chose to be quite free. It frequently happened, however, that when the original period terminated, the master had it in his power to compel the Hottentot to serve for a further term. This was brought about thus: during the term of service the Hottentot was usually supplied, at his own request, with articles and provisions, including, perhaps, wine and brandy, over and above that to which he was entitled as pay. The cost of these extras was deducted from what was due at the expiration of the contract. The improvidence of the Hottentot more often than not, led him to incur greater expense than could be liquidated by what eventually became due to him; in other words, at the end of his time he found himself a debtor to his master. The only way then of clearing himself from the debt was to contract himself for a further period of service, when the same difficulty would occur again, probably encouraged by the farmer himself. Thus without the regulations being violated, their intention in this particular was defeated and the Hottentot condemned to become a slave, or prisoner, for an indefinite time to the farmer who once secured his services. In some cases loss of cattle due to neglect was laid to the charge of the servant and that formed a pretext for further lengthening the time of service. The whole problem of the treatment and political status of the Hottentot became a matter of much careful consideration with Lord Caledon. He had before him the complete and lengthy report of Colonel Collins and therefore also, indirectly, the advice and experience of those who were most conversant with the general state of affairs. It was clear that the vagabond life led by those Hottentots who were neither in the employ of the farmers nor at a missionary institution was harmful to both themselves and

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the community at large. The governor felt that "these people in the same manner as other inhabitants should be subject to proper regularity in regard to their places of abode and occupation". It was also evident that "the provisions made from time to time for securing the fulfilling of contracts of hire between the inhabitants of this Colony and Hottentots are not sufficient for the intended purpose". Acting therefore upon the information he had gained and prompted by considerations of humanity and wise policy, he drew up a new list of regulations dealing with these matters, and issued them as the famous Proclamation of November 1st, 1809, known as the "Magna Charta of the Hottentots".

It was enacted that every Hottentot, in the same manner as the white inhabitants, should have a fixed place of abode, which was to be registered in the landdrost's office. In the event of a Hottentot's removing to another district, which he was at perfect liberty to do unless bound down by contract, he had to obtain a certificate from the landdrost of the district which he was leaving and show it, for purposes of registration, to the landdrost of the district in which his new home was to be formed. Neglect of this entailed liability to arrest as a vagabond and treatment accordingly. Any inhabitant taking a Hottentot into his service for a month or longer had, with the Hottentot, to appear before the landdrost and, *in triplicio*, to sign a document containing all the details of the agreement. The agreement expired on the last day of the time stipulated in the contract. The servant was then free to depart with his wife, children, all his cattle and other property. If the master in any way prevented this he was liable to a fine of Rds. 100. The wages agreed upon had to be paid strictly at the periods mentioned in the agreement. In case it was found at the expiration of the term of the contract that the Hottentot had incurred debt to a greater amount than the wages due, the master could not on that account make any further claim on his services. He could, however, prosecute the Hottentot for debt before the Board of Landdrost and Haemraaden, who, finding the claim to be founded, condemned the Hottentot to the payment, and left the plaintiff to carry the condemnation into effect *ordinario modo*.

To protect the Hottentot against cajolery into excessive

debt to his master as well as a check upon the master himself, it was enacted that the nature and value of the supplies should, at the time of the supply, be notified to the field-cornet and a memorandum of the transaction kept. No wine, brandy or other spirituous liquors were to be regarded as necessities and no expense therefore on that account was to be considered. In cases of ill-usage, the Hottentot was empowered to lodge a complaint against his master, who, if the charge were substantiated, might be fined any sum between Rds. 10 and Rds. 50. In worse cases, where mutilation or any serious injury was done, whereby disablement for any length of time resulted, the landdrost prosecuted according to the common law of the Colony. The Hottentot, on the other hand, was liable to personal correction by the tronk master, should the charge be without foundation. In order to prevent vagrancy, Hottentots going about the country, either on the service of their master or other lawful business, had to be provided with a pass, which might be signed by either the master or magistrate of the district. Any white inhabitant, to whose place a strange Hottentot went, had to demand to see his pass, and in the event of one not being produced, the Hottentot had to be arrested and delivered up to the nearest officer of justice. These regulations seem to have effected the objects which Lord Caledon had in view.

In 1812 Sir John Cradock, who had then become governor, expressed his opinion that their enforcement had been attended by the most beneficial results. The experience, however, of over two years indicated that with a few additions to and modifications of the original provisions, still further good might ensue. Accordingly, on April 23rd, 1812, Sir John Cradock issued what may be considered as a supplementary proclamation. The chief feature was the enactment that children, whether male or female, born of Hottentot parents while in the employ of a farmer or inhabitant, and maintained until the eighth year by such inhabitant, should, as compensation for the cost incurred, be apprenticed to the employer of the parents for a period of ten years; provided that the employer was a humane person and one upon whom strict reliance for the good treatment of the apprentice might be placed. In the event of the service of the child not being

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The tendency of this measure, if carried out in the spirit which was contemplated, was threefold. In the first place, it was an inducement to the inhabitants to treat the Hottentots and their children well, in the hope of an increased supply of labour, which was always scarce. Secondly, to encourage habits of industry in preference to the vagabond and idle life which came more natural to the Hottentot; and, thirdly, to protect the farmer against the increasing call upon his substance, which the rapid increase of the Hottentot families entailed. It had further the tendency, however, of keeping the Hottentots in the employ of the inhabitants in preference to taking up their abode at the missionary stations. This may possibly have accounted for the hostility with which the London Missionary Society's missionaries viewed these two proclamations. For though they bear every evidence of having been drafted primarily in the interests of the Hottentots, they were a few years afterwards distorted and misrepresented in England, where well-intentioned advocates of missionary causes, in total ignorance of South African matters, were led to believe that they had been drawn up with the express purpose of enslaving and oppressing the Hottentots.

In the year 1809 considerable indignation and horror was created in England by the contents of a letter which had been transmitted to the London Missionary Society by Mr. Read.<sup>1</sup> It appeared in No. 20 of the Society's *Transactions*, and ran thus:—

"BETHELSDORP, August 30th, 1808.

"The poor Hottentots continue to be a suffering and oppressed people—not by the Government at the Cape; on the contrary, their pacific and liberal conduct is highly to be praised, and we doubt not if the Government knew of the horrid crimes committed in the distant districts measures would be taken to restrain them. A poor Hottentot came to us a little time since, who had been kept twenty-five years in service

<sup>1</sup> The chief assistant of Dr. Vanderkemp.

without being hired, and was now obliged to run away to get free and leave his property behind him. When asked if he had children, he said he had left a daughter behind, pickled, that is, she had been terribly flogged with a sambok or whip made of the skin of the rhinoceros, and then a great quantity of salt rubbed into the wounds (sometimes gunpowder and vinegar are mixed with the salt). We have lately been assured of three horrid murders of a Hottentot, his wife and child. The Hottentot was one Oersen, an excellent character who had been a waggon-driver to Colonel L. at Fort Frederick, and was repairing peaceably from Graaff Reinet to our Institution. They were met by a number of African peasants. After they had conversed some time in a friendly manner, his hands were tied to his knees, on which he was placed and shot dead. The infant was taken from its mother's arms by its legs and its brains beaten out. When the tears were seen to fall from the mother's eyes, a savage boor, now living in our neighbourhood, drew his knife and threatened if he saw another tear he would cut her eyes out of her head that moment. As soon as the child was dead, the mother was then thrown upon her back and her throat cut. It was Brother Vanderkemp's pleading the necessity of punishment of such crimes to General Janssens that occasioned his being ordered to the Cape. We are in the way of hearing more of these things than other persons, and could multiply the accounts of such as I have mentioned, and of a more horrid nature, but should be perhaps as little believed as Vaillant and Barrow. We pray and we hope that the friends to humanity in the Society will likewise assist us, that this horrid scene may be an instrument to use active means to discover and punish these crimes."

It was, of course, impossible that accounts of such revolting crimes, appearing as they did in the official organ of so influential and respected a Society as the London Missionary Society, could be allowed to remain at the mere recital. The contents of the above letter soon came before the notice of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who promptly communicated with his Excellency the governor, Lord Caledon, upon the subject. This communication caused the greatest astonishment to the officials of the Colony. It was impossible to believe that such atrocities could be committed and that such a state of affairs

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could exist while the Government was as ignorant of it all as was the case. The Colonial Secretary lost no time in bringing this before Major Cuyler, the landdrost of the district concerned. In the letter dated September 21st, 1810, he said: "The statement in this letter casting so severe a reflexion on the conduct of those in the Interior districts, it will be obvious to you that it is essential to come at the Truth thereof by every possible means. His Excellency therefore desires that you will be pleased to summon Mr. Read before you, and to take from him the fullest information on oath touching the matters alluded to in his letter." Major Cuyler was probably not so surprised at the letter from England as the officials in the west had been, for he was accustomed to the insinuations and vague charges of the missionaries who accused him of ill-treating the natives and abuses of his office by refusing to listen to complaints brought before him. But of all this he had taken little notice as there was nothing definite on which to form a charge. He regarded it as the result of their displeasure at his compelling some of the Bethelsdorp Hottentots to take their share from time to time in the public works. Now, however, that there was something definite and specific, he lost no time in carrying out his instructions and commencing the investigation of the charges contained in Mr. Read's letter. The first witness examined was Mr. Read himself. With reference to the "three horrid murders" of Oersen, and his wife and child, of which "we have lately been assured," Mr. Read did not know who the murderer was or even when it took place, beyond that it occurred some six years previously when the country was in a state of war. The "savage boor" who threatened to cut out the woman's eyes was Ignatius Muller. This was all he knew about it and had been obtained in idle gossip with two Hottentots at Bethelsdorp, Willem Valtyn, his wife's cousin, and Jantje Michels. The Hottentot girl who had been "pickled" was the daughter, so Read continued, of one Uithaalter, and the deed was said to have been committed by a farmer named Rensburg, living in the Lange Kloof. He (Read) could not then state "crimes of a more horrid nature" as mentioned in his letter to England, but could if he had his book which was then at home.

Re-examined six days later, when he had had an oppor-

tunity of finding the said book, he produced it at the examination with much reluctance and would not allow it to go out of his hands. He said the information in it referred only to the years 1802 and 1803, when the country was in a state of disturbance, and acknowledged that the greater part of his information on these matters had been derived from Valtyn and Michels.

*Willem Valtyn*, in his evidence, stated that he had heard of the murder of Oersen from another Hottentot named Hermanus, who died two years before this investigation. Beyond having had a small tobacco transaction with Hermanus, he had not known him personally. He knew nothing about Oersen except that he was a waggon-driver. He denied ever mentioning anything about this to Mr. Read. He knew a Hottentot of the name of Uithaalter, but had never heard that his daughter had been ill-treated by her master, or, in fact, did not know of any Hottentots being ill-used by the inhabitants.

*Jantje Michels*, sworn, said he knew Oersen. He (Michels) had been a member of Piet van Rooyen's commando during the rebellion of 1802. While they were in camp at the Zwartkops River, Oersen was brought in by Hottentot spies, and with him were his wife and child. While he (Michels) was sitting by the fire cooking his master's food, a Hottentot, Klaas Meyer, came into the camp and was cleaning his knife. When asked what he had been doing with it, he said that he had cut the throat of Oersen's child, and that his brother Paul had done the same to Oersen's wife. Oersen himself, he said, had been shot. Michels denied having told Mr. Read about this, though on one occasion he was talking to Valtyn about it, and Mr. Read happened to be near.

*Wildschut* gave evidence to the effect that he had been ordered to join Van der Walt's commando in 1802, and that on one occasion he with seven others had been sent from their camp at the Winterhoek to the Zwartkops River in order to learn the whereabouts of Piet van Rooyen's commando. On the evening of their arrival at the Zwartkops, a Hottentot named Matross arrived with a horse which he said had belonged to a "rover" called Oersen. Oersen had been discovered by a party of armed farmers while killing an ox which he had stolen, and fled with his wife who had a child upon her back.



CHAP. They were fired at and all killed, one shot killing both the  
VII. woman and the child. He (Wildschut) had never spoken on this matter to the missionaries.

*Ignatius Muller* said he was with Van Rooyen's commando in 1802, and had sixty-eight men under his command. He remembered that one evening, when they were in camp, he heard a shot fired and saw a patrol returning. On inquiry, he learnt that a woman and child had been shot while endeavouring to escape from the patrol. He had never known Oersen or his wife.

*Uithaolder*, in evidence, said that before he joined Bethelsdorp he had been in service with Gerrit Lindaque at Winterhoek<sup>1</sup> and that he had left his daughter Catharyn in the same service. He had heard from his wife and also from another Hottentot that his daughter had been beaten with a thong until she could not stand and that salt had been rubbed into the wounds on her back. He himself had never received any wages during the whole time of his service, but that he had not complained to the landdrost.

Mr. Read, in further support of his position, put in two documents containing thirteen other charges against various inhabitants, one of them being a new version of the Oersen affair. As, however, they referred to remote periods and to people who were no longer residing in the district, Major Cuyler did not enter into them. In fact, in the whole of his examination, he confined himself to the elucidation of the cases which had been mentioned in Mr. Read's letter to England, though the intention of Government was that a complete investigation into the whole question of cruelty to and oppression of the Hottentots should have been made. This investigation, unsatisfactory and incomplete as it was, served to show the great care it was necessary to exercise in placing any reliance upon the statements of the Bethelsdorp missionaries. The "three horrid murders," of which "we have *lately* been assured," turned out to be founded upon a circumstance which had happened at a time of war by a party proceeding against the combined Kaffirs and Hottentots under the sanction of the Government, six years before the letter was written. It is difficult to acquit Mr. Read of the charge of deliberately

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Read had said "Rensburg of the Lange Kloof".

wording the letter to the English public in such a manner as to convey the idea that this was a recent transaction and occurred during a time of peace. Lord Caledon, on receipt of Major Cuyler's report, was dissatisfied with the investigation. There had been no inquiry whatever into the greater number of cases brought forward, and in those which had been dealt with evidence had not been taken from people who were still living and must have known something of these things, *e.g.*, some of the sixty-eight men who were with Muller on commando, the Hottentots Klaas Meyer and his brother Paul and others. On November 27th, therefore, Lord Caledon brought the whole question before the fiscal (attorney-general) for his opinion and advice.

The fiscal's opinion was that, in view of the gravity of the accusations and the discredit such reports must bring upon the Colony, Messrs. Vanderkemp and Read should be examined before commissioners of the Court of Justice, with as little delay as possible, requiring them to state on oath all circumstances which had come to their knowledge respecting cases of cruelty and oppression which had either been stated *nominatim* or alluded to by them in their general assertions, so that the accused parties, if guilty, "may be brought to condign punishment, and the world be thereby convinced that Laws for the protection of the most defenceless are not only enacted but enforced in this settlement". There was some delay in the fiscal's office in dealing with this matter, for it was not until February 28th, 1811, that the above opinion was given, that is, about four months after Major Cuyler had sent his report (October 25th, 1810).

In the meantime the missionaries must have thought that the matter had ended and that no further steps were to be taken, for on January 14th, 1811, Dr. Vanderkemp wrote to Earl Caledon, stating that "the condition of the Hottentots is most deplorable, owing to the tyranny of the Colonists and the atrocious conduct of the inferior magistrates," and further, "that his expectation that the governor would have taken measures to remove the oppression of the natives had been disappointed and that no redress was to be had by applying to the landdrost". At this time also Mr. Read, as if desirous to throw more fuel on the fire, sent another communi-

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cation to England, which created more stir than his former one. It was dated from Bethelsdorp, January 11th, 1811. In it was stated that the "persons who feel themselves hurt by my letter (of August 30th, 1808) and not without cause have shown us much ill will since. Major Cuyler, who was unfortunately appointed to investigate the matter, has married one of these farmers' daughters, of course shutting his ears to the poor Hottentots. Indeed the complaints are become so numerous we can no longer pinch our consciences. There are of late several Hottentots missing, but we fear little will be done, as those who are accused as their murderers are not arrested. Some of the falsely called Christian Boers are accused of eight or nine murders. . . . I must entreat your co-operation, for such crimes still continue, upwards of a hundred murders have been brought to our knowledge in this small part of the Colony. . . . He [a Hottentot, whose wife is said to have been shot by a Boer, and two children left a prey to wild animals] is anxious to make it known to Government, but Lord Caledon will not give an opportunity. . . . If Mr. Wilberforce, the friend of injured Africa, had a fair statement of this business, he would surely exert himself. Our only wish is that suitable persons might be appointed to examine into matters. We had hoped that Lord Caledon would have sent such persons. But His Excellency must be kept in ignorance or be prejudiced against us." Mr. Wilberforce, thus challenged, did exert himself and, through the medium of the Rt. Hon. Spencer Percival, brought Mr. Read's documents to the notice of the Earl of Liverpool, who had succeeded Viscount Castlereagh as Secretary of State for the Colonies. But while this phase of the matter was progressing, there was a change in the governorship of the Colony. Lord Caledon left for England on September 6th and Sir John Francis Cradock (afterwards Lord Howden) became the new governor. Shortly after his arrival in Cape Town he received the following letter from the Earl of Liverpool :—

"DOWNING STREET, 9th of August, 1811.

"SIR,

"I have received the enclosed paper containing extracts from the Letters and Journals of a missionary of the

name of James Read, and I have taken the earliest opportunity of transmitting it to you. It is needless for me to recommend the subject of it to your most serious attention, or to point out to you (should these statements upon inquiry prove correct) that the Interests of Humanity and Justice and the Honour of the British Name demand the immediate adoption of the most effectual measures to secure the exemplary punishment of such atrocious crimes and to shield the injured Natives from the Barbarity of their oppressors in future.

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"I have, etc.,

"LIVERPOOL."

When this letter arrived, Messrs. Vanderkemp and Read were in Cape Town, having been summoned thither in consequence of the fiscal's action. A special commission of the Court of Justice was appointed to take their depositions, the examination lasting from May 1st until June 29th. While in Cape Town, Dr. Vanderkemp died of apoplexy, on December 15th.

The feeling and stir which had been aroused by the wide publicity of the missionaries' reports, and the notice they had received from the highest Government officials in England, rendered imperative the fullest investigation by those most experienced in such matters. Fortunately about this time, and while these troubles were brewing, a new procedure in the administration of the Court of Justice was instituted, which greatly facilitated the vast amount of work the depositions entailed besides rendering unnecessary the journeying of about a 1,000 witnesses from the distant parts to Cape Town. According to the regulations existing until 1811, the cognisance and punishment of all crimes and misdemeanours, and the adjudication of all civil suits in which considerable property was at stake, could only take place in Cape Town. And "whereas the delay which is thus occasioned in criminal cases weakens the impression that punishment should produce, while in civil suits the expense and inconvenience that attaches to those who reside in the interior frequently prevents the aggrieved from having recourse to the only legal means of redress," it was ordained by proclamation of May 6th, 1811, that a commission of the Court of Justice, consisting usually of two judges, should visit the distant districts once in each year or oftener, and thus

CHAP. give the inhabitants of those parts the same legal facilities as  
 VII. those enjoyed by the more fortunate living in or near Cape Town.

Such a measure as this had been for some time in contemplation, but it was left for the Earl of Caledon to carry into effect, and by doing so gave the utmost satisfaction to all concerned, besides leaving a lasting testimony of his own wisdom and fitness to guide the helm of the struggling Colony. The proclamation referred to contains seventy-one articles or regulations to be observed in criminal and civil cases, of which the 63rd, 64th and 65th are of special interest in connection with the missionary tactics, and were formulated, it should be borne in mind, *before* the operation of any of the legal and moral pressure produced by Mr. Read's blood-curdling effusions. They are as follows:—

Art. 63. "It is particularly incumbent upon the Commissioners that they, in their judicial capacity, take care that Proc. of November 1st, 1809, respecting the treatment of Hottentots, be strictly followed up; and that, as much as possible, regularity respecting the service of those Natives, as well as proper treatment of them, be punctually observed."

Art. 64. "The Commission is enjoined scrupulously to examine the records of punishment inflicted on slaves by order of the Landdrost, in order to ascertain that no unnecessary severity be practised on this unfortunate class of people."

Art. 65. "The Commissioners shall likewise, as far as lies in their power, ascertain that no improper domestic correction has been used by masters towards their slaves, without the same being brought forward for legal interference."

The first circuit court, consisting of Willem Stephanus van Ryneveld, Pieter Diemel and Francis Willem Fagel, left Cape Town on October 14th, 1811. They toured the whole Colony, including the distant districts of Graaff Reinet and Uitenhage, dealing with such cases as might, under ordinary circumstances, be expected to come before judges on circuit. They saw something of the state the Eastern Province was then in, owing to Kaffir inroads, and experienced considerable difficulty in collecting the necessary witnesses, as a large proportion of the male inhabitants were out on commando against the Kaffirs; even the landdrost of Graaff Reinet himself was

absent from his drostdy on so important an occasion, having to be in command of a body of burghers. Besides acting in their judicial capacity, they were commissioned to examine the state of the country generally with reference to its educational, religious and social matters. In their report of their observations to Sir John Cradock they remarked in connection with Bethelsdorp: "One small circumstance we could not avoid noticing when we came there, we visited the church and the place adopted for the instruction of the children. One of the missionaries named Smith who is charged therewith, being asked what number of pupils received instruction from him, he answered that he could not say, for that according to the system adopted there, every one must have his liberty so far even that no person was allowed to force the children to school, by which it frequently happened that children who had been taught for some weeks and who after they began to improve, absented themselves again from school, by which they could not make any progress." Having accomplished all that could well have been expected, the commissioners of the first circuit arrived in Cape Town on February 1st, 1812.

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To the commissioners of the second circuit fell the difficult and tedious duty of inquiring into the charges of Messrs. Vanderkemp and Read. On this account, as well as on that of the commotion which ensued, this circuit came to be known as the "*Black Circuit*". According to the regulations of May 16th, 1811, it was the duty of the landdrost to act, in his own district, as public prosecutor in those cases which had to be brought before a higher court. But in the special case of Uitenhage on this occasion Major Cuyler was, at his own request, relieved of this duty. The object in thus acting was partly to obviate all possibility of partiality in cases in which, without further investigation, he stood practically charged with corrupt practices, and partly to be enabled to clear himself of these charges, which had been so widely disseminated in consequence of the insinuations and aspersions of the missionaries. On account of the large amount of work which had to be done on this circuit, the commission consisted of four judges. Two were appointed to deal with the districts of Tulbagh and Swellendam, and two, Messrs. Lambert Christiaan Hendrik Strubberg and Pieter Laurens Cloete, for Graaff Reinet, George and

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Uitenhage. Mr. Advocate Gerard Beelaerts von Blokland, a man of distinguished uprightness and purity of character, was appointed to act as public prosecutor in the place of Major Cuyler at Uitenhage and to assist with legal advice the land-drosts of Graaff Reinets and George. They left Cape Town on September 23rd, 1812, and proceeded in the first instance to Graaff Reinets, where they arrived on October 13th. Having closed the court there on the 21st, they journeyed thence over Bruintjes Hooghte, Grahamstown, the Zuurveld, the Addo, and on November 3rd arrived at the drostdy at Uitenhage, where the session was opened on the 5th. The cases of alleged cruelty to the Hottentots and slaves were arranged in two lists. List No. 1 contained "cases of wilful murder and other cruelties committed on the Hottentots, which require a criminal prosecution and which are said to have taken place under the present English Government". In spite of Mr. Read's utmost exertions to scrape together everything which could add support to his "upwards of 100 cases of recent murders in Uitenhage," the list contained only sixteen cases of all kinds. List No. 2 contained those "cases which were said either to have happened previous to the last surrender in this Colony or which it was uncertain when they had happened". In this list there were forty-six cases.

It is not possible, within the scope of this work, to give even a digest of the whole of the voluminous evidence which was taken in all these cases. The following will perhaps suffice to give an idea of the nature of the accusations against the inhabitants, the facts on which they were founded and, generally, the results of the investigations.

The first case brought before the court was "The R. O.<sup>1</sup> Requirant contra Barbara Janse van Rensburg, wife of Martinus Oosthuisen, on a charge of gross ill-usage of a female slave, the consequence of which was said to be death". Dr. Vanderkemp's deposition was "that in the month of March, 1808, Rosina, a girl of about fifteen years of age, came running to Bethelsdorp to take refuge, assigning as a reason, the gross ill-usage she was continually obliged to undergo from her mistress, Mrs. Oosthuisen, declaring that her mistress had lately beaten her mother to death, having flogged her so long that

<sup>1</sup> *Ratione Officii.*

she died the next day. That he (Dr. Vanderkemp) had referred Rosina to Major Cuyler with a note in which he had informed him of that ill-usage and murder, but the only result of which was that Rosina was put in prison for a time and then sent back to her mistress." The evidence showed that the death of Rosina's mother, Spaasje, took place in 1806. Spaasje was 32 years old when she became the property of Mrs. Oosthuisen and served that mistress faithfully for many years. Mrs. Oosthuisen had never flogged her, on the contrary had always treated her kindly, though she acknowledged that she had "slapped her on the face and hit her with a thong". The scars on the slave's back, which were testified to by one witness, may have been due to severe ill-treatment by a former owner. Towards the end of her life she suffered from a chest complaint and was getting blind, on which accounts Mrs. Oosthuisen did not permit her to fetch wood or drive in the cattle if the weather was bad. When at last she took to her bed, Mrs. Oosthuisen visited her and supplied her with comforts. Finally Spaasje died of consumption. One witness stated that she had heard that Spaasje was found dead in the open with a bundle of sticks upon her back. All the evidence pointed to Rosina's having been a bad character. She had been accustomed to run away since her childhood and to return of her own accord, when she usually got a flogging. Dr. Milton, the surgeon to the troops, bore witness to having treated Rosina in hospital for the — disease, and of which she died before this trial took place. He further complained of the state of Bethelsdorp in this respect and reported it to Government as a nuisance to the garrison. Major Cuyler, in his evidence, stated that he had never heard of a slave called Spaasje, nor had he ever heard of any complaint against Mrs. Oosthuisen. When all the witnesses had been heard, it was decided that "as it now appears that Rosina, notwithstanding her bad conduct, was not immoderately punished, and as it also appears that the marks on the body of Spaasje are not to be attributed to immoderate correction, nor even that such were occasioned by the defendant, but on the contrary that the death of Spaasje was caused by illness, the R. O. Requirant feels himself obliged to declare that he has not any ground for further action against the defendant",



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Thus ended the first charge of murder.

Thcunis Botha was then brought forward on the charge "that Dina, a slave, had in the year 1810 come to Bethelsdorp, almost naked, creeping on her hands and knees, with the marks of gross ill-treatment on her body . . . and that her daughter had died of similar treatment". The circumstances attending this case indicated good ground for complaint against the defendant. Major Cuyler acknowledged that the family of Botha was reputed for ill-treatment to their Hottentots, that Dina had complained to him and that he had sent her back to Botha, "seriously warning him" on his treatment of slaves. Dr. Milton deposed to finding severe wounds on the head and face of Dina and marks of old flogging on her back and arms. Jan Tamager said that Dina's daughter was so beaten by her mistress with a thick stick that she fell to the ground and died the day afterwards. In giving judgment the court was of opinion "that it does not appear from the evidence that the death of the child could not have been caused by anything else than the beating she received, and therefore his (Jan Tamager's) evidence, so long as it is unsupported, even if it were not uncontradicted by any other, does not prove the *corpus delicti*". The finding of the court was "that Botha is discharged from all further prosecution respecting the complaint of Dina, but with regard to the treatment of the said slave as of the other people in his service, he should remain specially recommended to the vigilance of the landdrost". It seems strange that Botha did not receive, as he seems to have deserved, more severe punishment than this. In connection with this case Jan Tamager was tried and found guilty of premeditated falsehood and condemned to hard labour in irons for four months.

Further typical cases were the following: — Nel, charged with the murder of a Hottentot. The person of the accused not having been identified and one of the principal evidences being absent, directions were given to the landdrost to investigate the case and transmit the result.

Jacobus Scheepers was accused of the murder of Jan Blaauw. The evidence and "proceedings having been laid before the full court, the case terminated by a declaration, according to the prosecutor's statement and opinion, that no grounds for an action existed, and that Landdrost Cuyler had completely dis-

charged his duty". This is the usual formal ending of most of these cases. CHAP.  
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Johannes Kalitz and Willem Pretorius were called to account for the death of a Hottentot named Gezwind. After a minute investigation, the death of Gezwind was satisfactorily proved to have been an accidental one, and as the accusation rested upon the story of an unknown Kaffir, the parties were consequently acquitted of the charge and of every suspicion.<sup>1</sup>

The session at Uitenhage ended on December 3rd. The court then proceeded to the drostdy at George and sat from December 17th to January 5th, 1813. The greater number of cases were of the usual type. There were two, however, which merited all the harsh words which were said about them and called for the fullest investigation. In one, Elizabeth Kampher, wife of Hendrik van Staden, and her son-in-law Ter Blanche were accused of excessive ill-treatment of a female Hottentot named Catharyn Stephen. This is the case of the girl who was said to have been "pickled". Ten witnesses gave evidence as to Catharyn (aged fourteen and a half) having been stripped and laid on the kitchen floor and there held by three maids while Ter Blanche flogged her till the blood came. Her offence was taking a bowl of victuals before it was given

<sup>1</sup> The following further case at Uitenhage is quoted from Judge Cloete's *History of the Great Boer Trek*. A widow, one of the most respectable inhabitants in the district, was accused by the missionaries of the wilful murder of a young Hottentot. She had, according to the accuser, directed a boiler of hot water to be prepared and by force pressed down the boy's feet into the boiling water until they were completely scalded and his extremities destroyed. This woman had of course to be placed in the dock and tried as a criminal on this atrocious charge, a host of witnesses were brought up and examined, from whose testimony (and many of these Hottentots themselves) it was fully proved that many years before, while this widow lived in the Lange Kloof (which is the coldest district in Cape Colony), this young Hottentot had been sent out to collect some cattle and drive them home, when he had been caught in a snowstorm, that not returning at the appointed time, every search had been made for him by order of this widow; that he had at length been found and brought home late at night, with his extremities quite benumbed and frostbitten; that this widow had immediately, by friction and bandages, endeavoured to restore animation to his extremities; and in her ignorance, but from the kindest of motives, she had ordered a boiler of hot water to be prepared, and had kept the young lad's feet therein for several minutes, from no other possible motive than from a feeling of kindness and humanity; that the lad had lived for several years afterwards in her service and that of other masters, and subsequently died from disease quite unconnected with this injury. The widow was acquitted with every expression of sympathy by the judges.

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to her. A Dr. van Colff testified to the severity of the wounds produced. Mrs. van Staden acknowledged that she had treated Catharyn too severely, and requested a "fatherly forgiveness". She was fined Rds. 50 and condemned in three-quarters of the costs, while Ter Blanche, who tried to exonerate himself by saying that he did not perform the flogging of his own accord, but at the request of his mother-in-law, was fined Rds. 10 and condemned in one-quarter of the costs.

A far worse case than the above was that of Pieter Hendrik Ferreira and his wife Martha, who were accused of causing the death of two slaves and five Hottentots and of great ill-treatment of three others. A very large number of witnesses were examined and much of the evidence, though conflicting, was strongly confirmatory of the guilt of Martha Ferreira. This lady seems to have been well known as "Kwaade Martha" (ill-tempered or violent Martha), on account of the severity with which she treated her servants, using in her fits of temper sticks, ox-yokes, pot-lids and almost anything portable as instruments of correction. After a very long hearing, the court came to the conclusion that there were no grounds for action against the first defendant, but "a bill of indictment by way of personal citation was found against the second defendant, and after a full investigation as far as possible during the residence of the commission, the landdrost was directed to summon the witnesses, to whose testimony the defendant had appealed, before the court in Cape Town and further to proceed according to law".

Having closed the session in George, the commissioners returned to Cape Town, where they arrived on January 5th, 1813.

In all these trials, fifteen men and two women were charged with murder, of whom ten men and one woman were acquitted and one man was found guilty of assault. On charges of violence, there were thirteen men and two women, of whom five men and one woman were acquitted.<sup>1</sup> In the final report of this circuit to Sir John Cradock, the judges

<sup>1</sup> The statistics in this paragraph are obtained from Dr. Theal's *History*, vol. 1795-1838. The other matter in connection with the Black Circuit has been obtained chiefly from the manuscript documents in the Archives at Cape Town.

stated, referring to the cases brought forward by the missionaries of Bethelsdorp, that they appeared to be so devoid of truth that there were not even grounds sufficient to charge the accused with the costs of the investigations, and they "cannot avoid making one remark, that if the informers, Messrs. Vanderkemp and Read, had taken the trouble to have gone into a summary and impartial investigation of the different stories related to them, many of those complaints which have made such a noise as well in as without the Colony, must have been considered by themselves as existing in imagination only, and consequently neither the Government nor the Court of Justice would have been troubled with them". Further, in reporting on Bethelsdorp itself, they stated that "The late Dr. Vanderkemp established such an overstrained principle of liberty as the ground-work that the natural state of the barbarians appears there to supersede civilisation and social order. . . . Laziness and idleness, and consequently dirt and filth, grow there to perfection. . . . It is certainly not to be denied but that some of the Bethelsdorp Hottentots in former times suffered injuries from some of the farmers, from which many of the complaints brought before the Commission originated, but at the same time it is not the less true that there are many Hottentots at Bethelsdorp who have had a considerable part in plundering, robbing, setting fire to places and even murdering the inhabitants; and as the Hottentots as well as the missionaries who at present exercise the immediate control over them, do not wish to see these things brought to light but that they should be considered as forgotten and forgiven, the same forgiveness therefore should extend to those by whom they had been injured and not to represent their complaints in a false light."

Major Cuyler was quite exonerated from the false charges which were brought against him. He had the satisfaction of seeing the following in a despatch from Sir John Cradock to Lord Bathurst, dated August 11th, 1813: "I experience the greatest satisfaction in finding from universal testimony that the conduct of Major Cuyler of the Cape Corps, and acting landdrost of the district of Uitenhage, has been without reproach, and that the aspersions cast upon his character with so little consideration are entirely destitute of foundation".

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Grossly exaggerated as the greater number of these cases were, yet much of the evidence bears the impress of truth and is heart-rending. But so also would have been the evidence similarly obtained in investigations into the treatment of the lower classes in countries which laid claim to more civilisation than the Boers of South Africa. The "severe discipline," or the brutal floggings of the Army and Navy at that date would probably have furnished cases equal to anything brought forward on the Black Circuit, especially if they had been brought before the public through the medium of Bethelsdorp missionaries. The results of the investigations by the first two circuits, not only into the alleged cruelty to the natives, but also into the general social conditions of the large districts, further demonstrated, had that been necessary, the need there was for reform in many directions. Justice, by being taken nearer to the homes of the people, brought to light various offences which from the sparseness of the population and the difficulty of obtaining redress, had hitherto remained unexamined and unpunished. Reform, however, had begun and was in active operation. There was at the beginning of the nineteenth century a general tendency to greater humanity towards peoples in lower grades of civilisation and society than there had been previously; in other words, evolution was working in the sphere of humanity as in many others. Signs of this activity first made their appearance in Cape Colony in 1799, when General Dundas introduced his measure for the amelioration of the conditions of the Hottentots; Earl Caledon in 1809, actuated by the same high motives, issued his famous proclamation of November 1st; and Sir John Cradock, moved with the same spirit, in 1812, formulated his measure dealing with the protection of Hottentot children. In 1807 the slave trade was abolished in Cape Colony, and as has been shown, circuit courts were established in 1811. In not one of these wise and beneficent measures is there any reason to believe that the successive governors acted in consequence of missionary instigation or inspiration. Nor is there any evidence that the commotion caused by these trials conducted in the smallest degree to the welfare of the Hottentot or the humanisation of the Boer. On the contrary, great political harm was done. In the trials "nearly a hundred of

the most respectable families on the frontier were implicated and more than a thousand witnesses summoned".<sup>1</sup> The necessity there was, in consequence of pressure from England, for minute investigation into the conduct of the Colonists and the comparative unimportance of charges against the Hottentots was greatly misunderstood by the Boers; and taking place, as it did, before English and Dutch had had sufficient time to understand one another rightly, the seeds were sown of all the unhappy racial discord, with its attendant disasters and suffering, which forms so dominant a feature in the history of the Eastern Province.

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<sup>1</sup> *History of the Great Boer Trek*, by Mr. Justice Cloete.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE STRUGGLE FOR THE ZUURVELD.

CHAP. IN England, during the first decade of the nineteenth century,  
VIII. the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope was almost an unknown land, and consequently the estimate of its value as a dependency of the mother country had made but little advance on that held by the old Dutch East India Company. Cape Town was regarded as immensely important in connection with the ocean traffic to India and the East, and the remainder of the Colony as valuable only in so far as it conduced to the same end. Information on all matters concerning the "interior" and frontier did not arouse much interest in Cape Town, much less in England. Even when misfortunes and dangers had increased till life was hardly bearable, the Eastern Province was so little considered that almost any amount of suffering was to be passed over before the Government felt called upon to incur any expense on account of the unhappy frontier settlers. A prominent official in Cape Town probably voiced the general sentiment of the West when he gave as his opinion that it was better for the frontier Colonists to submit to a certain amount of injury than for the Government to hazard open hostilities with the Kaffirs, the ultimate advantages of which were by no means certain. The effect of continually putting off the evil day was to increase the trouble and to necessitate more drastic measures when, at length, action became imperative. A policy which practically allowed the most aggressive Kaffirs to pursue any lengths of annoyance and plunder upon the white inhabitants, and of putting restraint upon the latter in defending their homes and property, went by the name of "conciliation of the natives". Permitting them for so long to occupy districts in which they were intruders, and in which the younger Kaffirs were growing up under the impression that they were in their own rightful territories, served only to make their final dislodgment more difficult. The impunity with which they carried

on their maraudings, in consequence of the restrictions imposed upon the farmers in following up stolen property, added advantage to the already stronger party, and the general disinclination to make any extensive move against them, encouraged the Kaffirs to further acts of insolence and violence. Their growing audacity and contempt for all authority became more than usually marked towards the end of 1809, and for a time it seemed as if the Zuurveld Kaffirs had actually commenced a combined attack upon the Colony.

In December of that year, five Hottentot herds were murdered within a few hours' ride of the drostdy of Uitenhage, and all the cattle they were tending were driven off. At Bruintjes Hooghte, in the same month, a farmer named Isaac Joubert, five Hottentot men, two Hottentot girls and two slaves were killed. Ndhlabi, realising the freedom of action which the feeble administration conferred upon him, no longer observed his promise to remain beyond the Sunday's River, but moved with hundreds of his followers and formed a kraal at the junction of the two Fish Rivers near Commadagga, ousting from their homes six farmers of that district. When ordered to return by Major Cuyler, he refused. At the same time, two petty chiefs under Ndhlabi, also with a large number of followers, were artfully moving in small parties of ten and twelve into the Zwartberg regions. In the more northern parts, the country about the Tarka was being invaded by large hordes, which were gradually moving to the West, though Landrost Stockenstrom was told when he visited them that their object was to migrate to the country beyond the Great River (Orange). As might be expected, all this greatly increased the anxieties and fears in which the Boers constantly lived. Pursuits of stolen cattle became more continuous; absences from home, involving the exposure of women and children to danger, during the dark nights, became longer, and the difficulty of regaining what had been lost increased proportionately. Mr. Stockenstrom, in bringing the state of affairs before the notice of the Colonial Secretary on January 4th, 1810, said that the inhabitants of Zwagershoek and Buffel's Kloof (now Cradock) had no rest night or day, they were continually in search of stolen cattle and were at length wearied out and their horses knocked up. Before things had come to this pass,



CHAP. however, both Mr. Stockenstrom and Major Cuyler had fully  
VIII. realised their powerlessness to cope with the increasing pressure of circumstances and had made most earnest representations to Lord Caledon for military assistance. This appeal for help was so far heeded that the transport *Oxford* arrived in Algoa Bay on January 20th, having on board a company of the 21st Light Dragoons under the command of Captain Evatt and a body of the Cape Corps (Hottentots) under Major Lyster and Captains Fraser and D. Macdougall. The greater portion of this force was almost immediately sent off to Bruintjes Hooghte. This had the good effect of intimidating Ndhambi, for on hearing of the approach of the troops, he forthwith abandoned his new kraal and returned to the Bushman's River.

It was hoped that the presence of this force would restore confidence and induce many who were preparing to abandon their homes to remain and combine for mutual defence and protection. The inhabitants were made aware of the intentions of the Government in sending these troops by the following circular which was sent to all field-cornets:—

"UITENHAGE,  
"January 25th, 1810.

"His Excellency the Governor has been graciously pleased to aid us in the protection of our persons and property against the depredations of the Caffres by sending an additional force of troops in our district. I beg to impress upon your mind that this force is sent for the defence of the inhabitants, to protect them in their professions, but without any intention for the present on the part of Government to commence hostilities on the Caffres. The detachment of Dragoons under Capt. Evatt will be posted at Bruintjes Hooghte for the defence of that frontier; they are sent dismounted, though with every other appointment complete, and Government have ordered that Rds. 60 (£4 10s.) shall be paid for each horse to mount them; this sum, from the prices horses are sold at present, may appear inadequate to the procuring of the necessary number of horses. I beg therefore to explain to you and request you will impress the same upon the inhabitants of your Veld-cornetship, the great and heavy expense Government is at in defending this Colony—that the Dragoons are expressly sent

to our aid and that it becomes every man's duty to aid and support his Government. The Dragoons without horses will not be able to act so effectually, and should they be required to repel any intrusion of our troublesome neighbours, horses of course will have to be commandeered for them, therefore those inhabitants who have a second horse ought most cheerfully to part with him at the highest price Government can afford to give to mount those troops that are sent solely for our defence. All the Veld-cornets on the East side of the Zondags River are hereby ordered to make their reports in future, respecting the depredations of the Caffres, etc., to Capt. Evatt in the same manner as heretofore made to me, and I trust they will receive every possible aid and satisfaction from that excellent officer.

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“(Signed) J. G. CUYLER.”

The request in this circular was patriotically complied with, and in a short time the Dragoons were furnished with horses at the Government price. With this assistance, Major Cuyler's first measure was to replace by soldiers the farmers who had for some time been posted on guard at temporary outposts. Accompanied by Captain Evatt and thirty-five men of the Cape Regiment a tour was made through the Coega and Zandfontein districts, and other parts of Uitenhage which were believed to be affording cover to thieves. Having stationed pickets, the two officers went on to Bruintjes Hooghte where the Dragoons had already arrived. In order to acquaint Captain Evatt with the geography of the country to be protected, they took with them as an escort ten soldiers and ten farmers, and journeyed along the Fish River into the Zuurveld; thence across to the Kareiga River, a little beyond which they met Ndhambi and found him, as usual, ready with all sorts of excuses and fair promises.

A short distance farther, Captain Evatt left Major Cuyler in order to return to Bruintjes Hooghte. The latter with seven men had not gone far in the direction of the village of Uitenhage when they were met by a body of Kaffirs, to whom Major Cuyler must have been well known. They showed every sign of hostility and so insulted and threatened the landdrost, that he deemed it dangerous to proceed farther. One of the escort was sent after Captain Evatt's party for assistance. On their

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VIII. reached in safety.

The arrival of the small force from Cape Town was to the harassed inhabitants a gleam of hope that some mitigation of their burden was at hand. But soon, when it was discovered that the extent of protection and assistance the soldiers were to render was nothing more than the endeavour to awe ill-doers by their mere presence and to be passive spectators of robbery and violence, all prospect of safety and peace vanished. The Kaffirs, finding that whatever they did the military remained inactive, soon treated them with contempt and became worse than before. Threats from the field-cornets and farmers they had long ceased to regard. The great difficulty of retaining live stock, the continual commando or patrol, and the ever-present danger had made farming almost an impossibility. The Kaffir seemed to have virtual permission to do as he pleased in the districts of Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet. Hence the choice of either continuing to endure all this or to leave the country and find easier conditions elsewhere was thrust upon the white inhabitants. They mostly chose the latter, and preparations for abandoning their Eastern Province homes were at this time commenced in many parts.

In April the farmers of Bruintjes Hooghte brought their pitiable condition before Lord Caledon in the following petition, which was sent to Major Cuyler for transmission to Cape Town :—

“ SIR,

“ We the undersigned have perceived with great concern the approaching ruin of the country ; we have therefore deemed it necessary to collect the voices of the best inhabitants in order to furnish you with the most creditable testimony of the dangerous state of the inhabitants. They are not only robbed of their cattle, but the worst is the murdering of slaves and Hottentots. In the month of March four slaves and four Hottentots of different sexes were murdered by the Caffres and at least 500 head of cattle stolen. It is, Sir, our most humble request that you may be pleased, for the good of the public, to submit this letter, accompanied by a communication from yourself suitable to the occasion, to His Excellency the Gover-

nor, as soon as possible, for it is hard upon the inhabitants to be daily robbed, and they wish His Excellency graciously to look down upon them in this moment of danger. We have already had convincing proof of His Excellency's favourable disposition towards us by sending troops, for which we are most heartily thankful and implore His Excellency's further protection. We now see no possibility of being longer able to inhabit these districts, without the Caffres are driven back to their own territory. And we hope His Excellency will be graciously pleased to permit and order the inhabitants of the land to be called up, the danger being such as to require it.

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"We are, Sir,

"Your most obedient servants,

"GABRIEL STOLZ,

"B. J. DE KLERK,

"WIL. NEL,

"L. J. NEL,

"W. D. V. VEYWER,

"P. M. BESTER,

"J. M. KLOPPER,

"P. B. BOTHA,

"G. D. GEERE,

"C. ENGELBRECHT."

The Zuurveld farmers dispensed with the preliminary formality of giving notice of their intention to move. Those nearest the active volcano have least time for aught but immediate flight. In the month of April, 1810, almost every farm east of Uitenhage was abandoned, the people moving into the sub-districts of Graaff Reinet. As the places were vacated, the Kaffirs seem to have visited them and set fire to the thatch roofs of the houses and everything else that would burn. Two of the Zuurveld farms which were abandoned at this time are of special interest. One was the loan place of a certain Lucas Meyer called De Rietfontein, on which the city of Grahamstown was afterwards established. The other, called Noutoe, was occupied by De Lange, and is now Table Farm, about seven miles from Grahamstown. This retreat from the Zuurveld into the Graaff Reinet district created a commotion there, and was the determining factor in causing the inhabitants

CHAP. of that district to act likewise. Bad as it was to live anywhere  
VIII. in the Eastern Province at this time, it was far worse to be in the districts immediately contiguous to those in occupation by Kaffirs; and as, in consequence of this migration, the southernmost parts of Uitenhage practically became Kaffirland, the inhabitants of Graaff Reinet who hitherto had had the advantage of the protection which their situation gave them, now found themselves on the immediate frontier. Landdrost Stockenström used every means in his power to prevent this movement. Promises of protection and compensation for losses were made, and, these failing, the inhabitants were threatened that, if they left their loan places, the leases would be cancelled and would not be renewed. In the parts more distant from Kaffirland, these measures were successful. But in the exposed district of Bruintjes Hooghte, Captain Evatt wrote on May 17th saying that on account of depredations hourly committed, the Boers of that district had decided to remain no longer in it, and that he had not succeeded in prevailing upon them to reconsider their decision.

The return of the depredations in the district of Uitenhage for the quarter ending June 30th, 1810, showed that 577 cattle had been stolen of which 184 were recovered;<sup>1</sup> seven horses, two of them recovered, and seven Hottentot herds killed. Lord Caledon was not, of course, ignorant of the increasing commotion in the East, but he was reluctant to sanction any extreme measure. It was clear that a Kaffir war once entered upon would have to be followed up vigorously, leaving no doubt as to the ultimate subjugation of the native, or else it would end in completely ruining the settlers and jeopardising the whole Colony. At length, in May, 1810, he approved of what Major Cuyler had long advocated, namely, that the invaders should be confronted with a "formidable force" and driven back into their own country beyond the Fish River. It was suggested that this force should consist of from 700 to 800 men, made up of regular soldiers, the Cape Regiment and Boers, with two or three field-pieces. It was further suggested that the village of Uitenhage should become a military post, and that "quarters should be built on the spot for one captain, three sub-officers and a hundred men," "there being no quarters at

<sup>1</sup> The above does not include 177 cattle stolen in the Riet River district.

present, the men living in reed houses of their own construction". During this year, however, nothing came of these proposals, and events were allowed to shape themselves uncontrolled by high authority.

Emboldened by their successes and probably having gauged (with fair accuracy) the disinclination or fear of those who should have checked them, the Kaffirs took no pains to conceal their readiness to resist force with force. Lieutenant A. Bogle, writing from his camp at the Coega to Captain Macdougall on May 29th, said: "I was yesterday at the Kaffirs' kraals, where I met with the greatest insults; they came out and attempted to surround my party, which they could not effect; they asked me if I came there to fight, if I did they were ready, and before they would leave the ground they now occupy they would fight until every man's throat was cut. . . . The Kaffirs are assembling in great numbers, and if something is not done without loss of time we shall be in a dangerous situation."

It also became obvious that even the precaution of concealing the stolen cattle was disregarded. Instead of being sent into safety beyond the Fish River or into more wooded parts, they were retained at the kraals of the thieves, and open defiance was shown to those who went to recapture them. Their recovery involved more and more danger, and more often than not the pursuers, seeing their cattle in the hands of the Kaffirs, had to return without them.

In November an instructive object-lesson illustrating the Kaffirs' ability to resist attack and to retain spoil was furnished by the adventures of a party of farmers under the field-commandant, Stolz. They were intent on recapturing fourteen head of marked cattle which had been traced to the kraal of one of Ndhlabi's petty chiefs named Dedo. On Dedo refusing to restore them, a messenger was sent to report the matter to Ndhlabi. That chief sent his son to "hear the case". Dedo, however, still refused and used threatening language to Stolz. Withdrawing to a distance and forming a temporary camp, as was usual on such occasions, the party waited until a reinforcement of twenty-eight more farmers arrived, under the command of the field-cornet, Nel. An attempt was then made to recapture the cattle, when Dedo's people rushed forward with assegais. The Boers were ordered to dismount and to get ready

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to fire, but they desisted on the interposition of Ndhambi's son. Dedo then delivered up seven head. It was determined, however, to regain all fourteen. On the following day twenty more farmers arrived, having been sent by Major Cuyler as soon as the news reached him. Preparations were being made to recover the remaining seven, when Dedo and all his people came forward with shields and assegais and presented so warlike an array, that Ndhambi's son advised the Boers to retire with what they had unless they were prepared for a serious fight. They acted upon this advice and thus gave further proof of the Kaffirs' strength.

In October, Cungwa, with most of his people and cattle, crossed the Sunday's River with the intention of forming a kraal nearer to Uitenhage. When Major Cuyler objected, Cungwa offered as an excuse his desire to be nearer to the doctor on account of his ill-health. There may have been some truth in this statement, for he had for some time been suffering from disease, and moreover he was an old man. This was reported to the Colonial Secretary on October 4th. On this same date in the previous year, a similar report of Cungwa's inroad had been made. On that occasion the chief had stated that his move was on account of the health of his cattle. When he was ordered to return to his own place, he promised to do so in two days, but after five days longer he had made no move, but he then sent three messengers to Major Cuyler with an ox as a present. This was refused and returned to the chief. Cungwa took offence and sent word that the ox was sent as payment for the grass, but, says Major Cuyler, "now that he found that I would not take payment or allow him to remain, he said he would not remove for me". Shortly afterwards, however, he did return to his old kraal in the Alexandria district.

Among the Kaffirs there was probably only one who viewed with concern this gradual increase of disorder and violence, and that one was Ndhambi. With the shrewdness and foresight which were so characteristic of him, he undoubtedly realised that there must be some limit, however remote, to the extent of the suffering and ruin which the Government would permit the frontier inhabitants to endure. It was probably equally clear to him that the nearer that limit was approached, the greater was his danger of being driven from the fertile

country of the present districts of Lower Albany and Bathurst, a situation which he greatly valued. He therefore adopted a policy of "conciliation" towards the white man, a "conciliation" far more productive of the ends in view than that pursued by the white man towards the black. Instead of the defiance shown by the subordinate and less responsible chiefs, Ndhlabi listened to complaints and made a show of attempting to assist the farmers in the recovery of their property, usually succeeding to the extent of returning to them about 1 per cent., having taken the precaution to see that the remaining 99 per cent. were in safe hiding. An example of these tactics was his procedure in connection with a theft of two horses from a farmer named Du Plessis. They were traced to a kraal of one of Ndhlabi's people but could not be found. The Boers then proceeded to Ndhlabi himself and reported the affair. The chief, having expressed great displeasure at hearing so many reports of theft by his people, immediately sent off four Kaffirs to look out for the lost horses. One of the messengers shortly returned saying he had seen them. The farmers wished to ride off instantly to recover them, but Ndhlabi would not permit this. He said he would send for them himself as they would be sure to be hidden if white men came after them. The farmers waited two days, and as there seemed to be very little probability of the horses being brought back, they gave up the matter. These same Boers also made application to Ndhlabi for the payment of two slaves who had escaped to his people and had been killed by his orders. He answered most confidently that the landdrost would pardon him, or if he did not, he (Ndhlabi) could easily go round among the inhabitants and beg the required number of cattle to pay whatever was demanded as fine. His attitude of endeavouring to conciliate both parties, namely, his followers by a not too active search for what they had stolen, and the Boers by a show of anxiety to restore their property, was not unobserved. Captain Evatt, writing to Major Cuyler on November 24th, 1810, said: "Since my last letter I paid a visit to Ndhlabi, who as usual laughed at everything and received a few presents with seemingly great indifference. The chief purport of my mission to him was to learn how far his intentions were bent on a move, and by giving him in return for an ox he sometime ago sent, a few things to induce him to give up some



HAP. VIII. cattle, slaves and Hottentots; the two latter I could not get an answer about, the first mentioned he hesitated much about; that in consequence of his having so repeatedly assisted the Boers in the recovery of their property, his people were daily leaving him and would not listen to his orders. I left him rather displeased, but he told me if I would wait he would insist on one of his sons giving up some out of his kraal. Having delayed some time to no purpose we rode away. However, where we slept that night we were overtaken by five Kaffirs bringing out seven cows and three calves."

The retributive measures which had been contemplated in 1810 had been either delayed or postponed and the career of spoliation and murder had received no check. The year 1811 opened with the gloomiest forebodings for the white inhabitants. The extent of injury and suffering which the Government at the Cape thought might be endured before it was called upon to act had not yet been reached, while in England the minds of those who were susceptible to sympathy and pity for the suffering colonists were being poisoned by the calumnies and falsehood of missionary enterprise. In this deserted condition, the Boers more than ever felt the impossibility of offering adequate resistance to the increasing violence of the Kaffirs, and the abandonment of so many homes was further assurance to the latter of their comparative strength. Further, as the inactivity of the soldiers seemed to indicate that they were afraid of assisting the Boers, the Kaffirs assiduously followed up their opportunities. During the first three months of this year, robberies were committed on thirty-nine different places, resulting in a total loss of 1,205 cattle and horses and the murders of two Boers and six Hottentots. One of the farmers was a highly respected and inoffensive old man named Jan Davel. His farm, De Valefontein, in the Kromme River<sup>1</sup> Field Cornetcy, was visited on March 8th by a party of Kaffirs and Hottentots under the leadership of a brother of Habana and the Hottentot Dirk Trompetter. Having killed "Oom Jan" and two of his Hottentot herds, the savages got clear with 120 head of cattle.

<sup>1</sup> At this date, the large district of Uitenhage was divided into the following Field Cornetcies: Zwart Ruggens, Bruintjes Hooghte, Riet River, Kromme River, Winterhoek, Zwartkops River, Bosjesman's River and the Zuurveld.

At daybreak on May 8th an isolated homestead in the Zwart Ruggens district was surrounded by a large party of natives, many of whom had taken part in the attack on Davel's place. Among the band was the famous David Stuurman, who had recently returned to the East, having effected his escape from Robben Island.<sup>1</sup> The inmates of the house were suddenly awakened by the violence of the attack, and before any preparations for defence could be made, the two brothers Petrus Johann and Frans Nicolaas Slabbert, sons-in-law of Jan Davel, were killed. The terrified women and children fled with but little clothing from the house and made their way to the nearest white inhabitant, another Slabbert, some miles distant.

One day early in June a young man named Jacob de Winter went out, as usual, with his cattle in order to graze them on the land about two miles from Van Aardt's post, near the present Longhope Siding on the Alicedale-Cookhouse line. In the evening neither he nor the cattle returned, though his dog did. After searching all night, he was found in the morning quite dead and tied to a tree; he had five assegai wounds and his skull had been fractured by either stones or knobkerries. These continually successful attacks on armed cattle guards and farm-houses rendered the natives still more formidable, for they were gradually supplying themselves with guns and ammunition. They were soon encouraged to attack in open daylight, and these attempts were attended with no less success than their more usual nocturnal enterprises had been. An instance was the capture of 234 head of cattle in the daytime of July 13th from the farm of L. J. Erasmus on the Fish River. The animals were guarded by three Boers with guns. A party of thirty Kaffirs approached, five of whom had guns, and while some showed themselves prepared to engage the three Boers in fight, the remainder successfully drove off all the cattle.

<sup>1</sup> The evidence that David Stuurman was with this party is contained in the statement of some Boers, who, while they were outspanned during the night, heard cattle being driven past their waggons. Finding the party to consist of Kaffirs with cattle, presumably stolen, they fired. The fire was returned. Pursuit in the dark was commenced and the cattle, which were found to belong to the Slabberts, were recaptured. In the morning when the Boers were driving them home, some natives, believed to be those who passed in the night, approached and endeavoured to re-take the cattle, and among these, David Stuurman and Dirk Trompetter were recognised.

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These circumstances tended naturally to the depopulation of the districts of Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet. In May, Major Cuyler, for the information of Lord Caledon, stated that "the Kaffirs have now got possession of a large portion of the frontier of Uitenhage and that their daily intrusions are causing the inhabitants to retire more interiorly, threatening to cut off communication with Graaff Reinet. . . . The instructions I am honoured with from Your Excellency do not afford the means of keeping these rovers in awe or of maintaining my ground against their repeated intrusions. It is now, I believe, some years since I humbly proposed to your Lordship to be allowed to show a force of 700 or 800 inhabitants in front of these intruders' kraals, desiring them to move over the Great Fish River." The Buffel's Hoek district, now Cradock, was at this time entirely abandoned and very few Boers remained in Zwagger's Hoek and Brintjes Hooghte. Mr. Stockenstrom writing from the Baviaan's River to the Colonial Secretary on July 26th said: "should such as are still left in the Brintjes Hooghte and here be also obliged to quit their places, the Caffres will have free access to all the divisions, and (as in former times) may do much mischief without the possibility of their being exterminated but with great difficulty. This, however, might have been prevented had the offenders been immediately punished, but on the contrary the other chiefs, seeing that these depredations are committed with impunity, permit their people to do the same, in the supposition that one is afraid of them. . . . I cannot forbear observing that I consider it a great hardship to expose the people with their wives and children at so great a distance, without being able to afford them a sufficient means of resistance, if the Caffres, as seems to be their intention, should actually attack these divisions on different sides. The troops, as they are for the most part inactive, are held in no consideration by the Caffres, and these entertain, I dare assure you, very erroneous ideas relative to the motives with which they have been stationed. Possibly among the inhabitants are some who coincide in the ideas conceived by the Caffres. That Government after the robberies and murders committed by the Caffres during so many successive years should still continue to show so much indulgence it is not for me to judge of; however, I cannot

relinquish the opinion I entertained last year and the plan I thereupon in one of my letters suggested, which was that I conceived if upon any act of outrage being committed the trace were followed and the perpetrators pursued to the kraal with a sufficient force, the kraal then attacked and destroyed and the plunder retaken, without, however, taking possession of anything belonging to the inhabitants of the kraal, it would tend to frighten the marauders, without occasioning any open war."

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In the desperate state<sup>1</sup> to which the Eastern Province was reduced, both landdrosts exerted themselves to the utmost to prevent the further migration of the inhabitants and to stem the progress of the invaders. Each appealed in vain to the other for assistance. Mr. Van Kerval, the landdrost of the newly created district of George,<sup>2</sup> was asked by Major Cuyler to send fifty of his burghers. Mr. Stockenstrom, with a small escort of farmers, visited the remaining inhabitants in Bruintjes Hooghte and Baviaan's River, persuading them upon the apparently empty promise of more adequate protection, to remain a little longer. He redistributed the available troops and burghers, organised patrols and adopted every other measure of defence which the circumstances permitted. It is worthy of remark that it was while all this was taking place that the "Black Circuit" was holding its sittings. Hence the difficulty of procuring many of the witnesses, who were on duty at the outposts at this time, and hence also the reason of Landdrost Stockenstrom's prolonged absence from his drostdy.

The results of the Kaffir visitations in Uitenhage during the quarter ending June 30th were, 1,077 cattle stolen, of which 451 were recovered, twenty-two horses stolen, of which two were recovered; two white men and two Hottentots murdered. In the Baviaan's River district, 210 cattle and eleven horses stolen; one white man and two Hottentots killed.

<sup>1</sup> Capt. Hawkes writing to Cuyler from Bruintjes Hooghte, June 24th, 1811: "This country is on every side overrun with Kaffirs, and there never was a period when such numerous parties of them were known to have advanced so far in every direction before; the depredations of late committed by them exceed all precedent, and I believe it my indispensable duty to represent to you for the information of His Excellency the Governor and Commander of the Forces that unless some decisive and hostile measures are immediately adopted I solemnly declare I apprehend considerable and the *most serious* consequences".

<sup>2</sup> A portion of the district of Swellendam was proclaimed a separate district on April 23rd, 1811.

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Lord Caledon's position in relation to the Eastern Province was, undoubtedly, one of great perplexity and anxiety. It is scarcely likely that, just and humane as he was, he would have permitted the extent of misery which he must have known existed on the frontier, had he been free to act in accordance with his own judgment. The conditions necessitated movements of some magnitude and consequently expense; and this, he well knew, would be viewed with the most grudging approval by the authorities in London. In June, however, urged on by the communications he had received from Landdrosts Stockenstrom and Cuyler, he again determined to sanction a move against the Kaffirs. Having conferred with Lieutenant-General Grey, the commander of the forces, on Major Cuyler's proposals, he so far favoured them as to sanction a commando of the neighbouring Boers assembling and marching to a spot where the Kaffirs were most numerous. It was decided to demand the murderers of Davel and the Slabberts and the restoration of all stolen cattle, and the Kaffirs were to be ordered to return to their own country. In the event of these demands not being complied with, the Boers were then to commence to drive all the Kaffir cattle towards Kaffirland, none were to be seized unless there was the most unequivocal proof that they belonged to the colonists. If the chiefs showed any disposition to hostility, their persons might be seized, but on no account (the supposition of danger being ever so strong) was a shot to be fired or any violence to be used by any of the commando unless the Kaffirs actually commenced an attack. The movement was to be a display of force rather than its exercise, and its ends were to be attained without recourse to open warfare.

Another delay took place, however; for about this time Lord Caledon was expecting to be relieved of the government of the Cape and to be permitted to return to England. He did not wish to commence an undertaking which he could not accomplish and of which his successor might not approve, and thus the above instructions to Major Cuyler were withheld. But, probably with the desire of creating the impression that there was an intention of doing something, he substituted other instructions of a less drastic nature. A commando might be assembled for checking depredations and, if need be, the military might be called upon to assist, but the movement

was to be considered as directed only against a set of wandering vagabonds and marauders in whose atrocities the Kaffirs as a nation had no concern. Such procedure was useless. In the first place, all the Kaffir tribes which were within stealing distance were involved, and, though Gaika made a show of friendship, there was abundant evidence that his people were among the marauders, and that cattle were driven into his country for safety. Secondly, more than one-third of the male inhabitants were already on outpost duty and doing all that was possible without further help. These proposals, therefore, did not meet the views of Landdrosts Stockenström and Cuyler; they met at the Riet River in August to consider the situation, and on the 23rd of that month they sent a joint answer to the governor, pointing out the impossibility of acting effectively under the restrictions which were imposed upon them, and again pressing for authority to call out a commando of six hundred inhabitants. The plan was to form these into three divisions, each under the command of a military officer, and to march by different routes to a point of concentration; to seize Ndhlabi and hold him as hostage until all Kaffirs were out of the Colony, and then to deliver him over to Gaika, who was to be acknowledged as the paramount chief. Any Kaffirs afterwards found in the Colony without some token of permission from him were to be shot.

On September 6th the new governor, Sir John Cradock,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sir John Francis Cradock (Caradoc after 1820), born August 12th, 1762, was son of the Bishop of Kilmore, afterwards Archbishop of Dublin. Entering the army at fifteen, he obtained rapid promotion, chiefly through the political influence of his father, though subsequent events proved that he well deserved it. At twenty-three he was major in the 12th Light Dragoons; three years later he was promoted to the rank of lieutenant-colonel and was given the command of his regiment when it was ordered to the West Indies in 1790. For the meritorious services rendered in those parts, he received the thanks of Parliament and was raised to the rank of colonel. He was wounded at the capture of Martinique. Returning to Europe, he distinguished himself in the successful discharge of military administrative offices in Ireland and took an active part in the suppression of the rebellion in that country in 1798, when he became major-general. In that same year he married Lady Theodosia Meade, daughter of the first Earl of Clanwilliam. He served in the Egyptian campaign of 1801 under Sir Ralph Abercrombie and at its conclusion was appointed commander-in-chief of the forces in Madras. Differences of opinion between himself and the governor of Madras as to the cause of the mutiny which broke out at Vellore led to the recall of both from India. In December, 1808, General Cradock took the command of the British forces then operating in Portugal, but before he had had time to accomplish anything decisive he was appointed to the governorship of Gibraltar. In

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was installed in Cape Town. His experience in quelling rebellion and riot in Ireland and India rendered him just the type of man required to settle effectively the native question in the East. He had been in the Colony scarcely a month before he had completely grasped the situation and had taken steps to deal with it. The policy of the so-called conciliation was, for a time at least, at an end, and hopes of a very real nature sprang up in the breasts of the despairing Boers of Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet. He approved of the proposals that had so long been advocated by Major Cuyler, but instead of making the Boers play the prominent part, his military instinct prompted him to place the conduct of affairs in the hands of the regular forces and to use the armed inhabitants as auxiliaries. The latter, however, were not to be led to think that their own exertions could be dispensed with in maintaining tranquillity after order had been restored or that a military force could always be at their beck and call. The entire charge of the operations was placed in the hands of Colonel John Graham, who, it will be remembered, arrived in the Colony in 1806 and took part in the recapture. In issuing instructions to him on October 6th, Sir John Cradock said: "It has fallen to my lot to give effect to the apparent intentions of my predecessors in the Government of this Settlement, to free the Territories of His Majesty from the incursions of the Caffre nation or of any other tribe that may molest His Majesty's subjects in the peaceable possession of their habitations and property. . . . As the measures of passive conciliation and forbearance have proved ineffectual, it is necessary to adopt another mode of proceeding, and their complete expulsion from our Territory must be accomplished. I experience much satisfaction, while entering upon a measure of this description, from the general information that His Majesty's subjects have not in any of the late proceedings been the aggressors, but that the Caffre nation have been constantly the depredators and offenders. . . . It

1811, he became governor of the Cape, which office he retained until April, 1814. In 1819, through the influence of the Duke of Wellington, he was created Lord Howden in the peerage of Ireland, and shortly after, namely in 1820, he changed his name from Cradock to Caradoc. On September 7th, 1831, he was elevated to a peerage in the United Kingdom and became Lord Howden of Howden and Grimston in the county of York. He died on July 6th, 1839, leaving one son, Sir John Hobart Caradoc. He died without issue in 1873, hence the English and Irish baronies of Howden became extinct in that year.







COLONEL JOHN GRAHAM, AS LIEUTENANT IN THE 90TH REGIMENT.

*From the Painting in the possession of F. C. G. Graham, Esq, C.C. and R M., of Grahamstown.*

will be my desire that you take the most effectual measures to clear His Majesty's territories from the Caffre nation, or marauders of any description, and that they be repelled permanently within their own boundaries. In effecting this, I am to enjoin in the first operations the greatest mildness and temper from every person under your command, that the nature of such a proceeding will bear, that as far as it is practicable Explanations and Persuasions to the utmost extent are to be the means employed, and that it is not till such a course be found hopeless after successive trials that measures of severity be resorted to. . . . In this case I empower you to proceed to those measures of example and effect as will produce the object of your mission, that His Majesty's Territory should be freed from every invader, and that this indispensable point should be established both now and hereafter upon a lasting foundation."

The public was made aware of the governor's intentions by a proclamation issued on October 8th, two days after Colonel Graham had received the above instructions. Landdrost Stockenstrom and Cuyler were authorised to collect a commando to act in conjunction with the military. Colonel Graham was appointed commissioner for all civil and military affairs within the drostdies of Graaff Reinet, Uitenhage and George,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> By His Excellency Lieutenant-General Sir John Francis Cradock, Knight of the Most Honourable Orders of the Bath and Crescent, Colonel of His Majesty's 43rd Regiment of Foot, Governor and Commander in Chief of His Majesty's Castle, Town and Settlement of the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, and of the Territories and Dependencies thereof, and Ordinary and Vice-Admiral of the same, Commander of the Forces, etc, etc, etc.

To Lieutenant-Colonel John Graham —

By Virtue of the Power and Authority vested in me and placing the fullest confidence in your prudence and discretion, I do hereby constitute and appoint you, Lieutenant-Colonel John Graham, to be Commissioner during pleasure on the part of His Majesty, for all civil and military affairs within the Drostdies of Graaff-Reinet, Uitenhage and George, hereby requiring the respective Landdrosts as well as the Boards of Landdrosts and Heemraden and the Field Cornets to pay implicit obedience to any orders that you may judge proper to give them, in the same manner as if such orders had been issued by myself And I do further desire that (notwithstanding this commission) the internal arrangements of the aforesaid Drostdies may be carried on according to the existing regulations and forms excepting in such instances in which you may judge it expedient to order a deviation therefrom.

Given under my hand and seal at the Castle of Good Hope this 30th day of September, 1811.

L.S.

J. F. CRADOCK.

By His Excellency's command,  
HENRY ALEXANDER.

CHAP. and, on his arrival at Uitenhage, martial law was to be in force  
VIII. in those drostdies.

The troops for this service were despatched from Cape Town on October 8th on board the transport *Upton Castle*. They consisted of the remainder of the Cape Regiment and detachments of the 21st Light Dragoons, Royal Artillery and drivers and the 83rd Foot, a total, including the officers, of 460 men with 96 horses. The total regular force on the frontier was then 1,033 men of all ranks with 194 horses. Of the burgher force, besides those authorised by the proclamation above referred to, there were contingents from George, Swellendam and Tulbagh. This movement was the largest which, up to that date, had ever operated against the Kaffirs. With the sympathy of a governor who had had experience of and had dealt successfully with rebellion in other countries and an officer of Colonel Graham's ability to conduct the campaign, there was every promise of the inauguration of a new and better state of things. A necessary procedure in the preparations which occupied the remaining three months of this year, was a mission to Gaika in order to assure him that no hostility against himself was contemplated. This was successfully carried out by Mr. Stockenstrom, who visited that chief and obtained his sanction to allow those who were to be driven from the Zuurveld to reside in his country. Gaika promised to abstain from molesting Ndhlabi and his followers if they behaved themselves peaceably. It is doubtful, however, how far this promise was of any value, for as has already been pointed out, Ndhlabi was by far the more powerful chief and would probably dispense with the formality of seeking Gaika's permission to reside in his country, and seize his cattle or anything else if he chose to do so.

In December the necessary preparations were completed and the various forces took the field. The centre division was under the command of Captain Fraser, the right under Major Cuyler, and the left, consisting of 200 men of the Cape Regiment and about 100 burghers of Graaff Reinets, was under the command of Mr. Stockenstrom. This division, in order to defend Brintjes Hooghte and the southern part of the district of Graaff Reinets, was posted at a spot in the country a little to the north of the Zuurberg mountains. The centre and right

divisions crossed the Sunday's River just after Christmas. On the east of that river there is a very extensive and, in parts, almost impenetrable bush, known as the Addo Bush, in which the Kaffirs with hundreds of cattle had congregated in vast numbers. To dislodge these was the task allotted to the right division. It was very soon discovered, however, that the strength of the enemy and the natural difficulties of the country necessitated a larger force than had been detailed for this service. Major Cuyler therefore communicated with Colonel Graham, who had formed a temporary camp near Coerney, in order to procure assistance. Colonel Graham immediately sent a messenger to Mr. Stockenstrom with orders to march his force to Coerney for the purpose of co-operating with the more southern divisions. But the landdrost feared that the colonel could not be aware of the danger to which that district would be exposed if he abandoned his position, and, with no unwillingness to obey orders, determined to go to see the colonel before moving his men. The endeavour to carry out this determination not only cost the worthy old gentleman his own life, but also led to the destruction of some of those who acted as his escort. At daybreak, on December 29th, a party of forty-one left the camp and after travelling for about five hours saw, in the distance, a number of Kaffirs approaching. The Boers were anxious to ride on without taking notice of them, but Mr. Stockenstrom, presuming upon the esteem and friendly professions which had always been shown him by both white and black, insisted upon meeting them. Notwithstanding the repeated remonstrances of his followers, he dismounted and, unarmed as he was, entered into a long conversation with them. Mr. Stockenstrom had, on the previous evening, expressed his intention of interviewing any of the chiefs he might meet on the subject of their rumoured right to occupy the Zuurveld in virtue of a purchase which it was said had been made by them, and that if they would consent to retire peaceably, of having the matter investigated and due compensation made in the event of such a transaction being proved. His son tells us that on this evening (December 28th) "we were as usual round our fires in the camp. Anyone acquainted with the system of the Burgher Commandos is aware that at these fires there reigns perfect equality and freedom of speech. The

CHAP. causes and necessity of the war were amply discussed. Some  
VIII. of the elders of the Boers maintained that we were not altogether in the right. A few even protested that they firmly believed that the Kaffirs did buy the Zuurveld from the Dutch authorities, and two or three of them affirmed with oaths that they had seen in certain herds some of the oxen which had been received in payment ; some as firmly denied this altogether."

While the parley with the Kaffirs proceeded, the Boers seem to have become divided into two parties, one of fifteen standing near Mr. Stockenstrom and the other of twenty-five waiting at some little distance. During this time also, other Kaffirs gradually joined the assembly, until in about half an hour there were about a hundred, and the small band of farmers found themselves surrounded. At length, re-mounting his horse and perhaps thinking that the benevolent interest he had expressed on their behalf had influenced their better feelings, Mr. Stockenstrom prepared to proceed. Scarcely had he moved when, with fearful violence, the Kaffirs rushed suddenly forward and endeavoured to stab the whole party to death. The landdrost and thirteen of the Boers were killed, two though wounded, managed to escape. The Boers who were at a distance could render but little assistance, as to fire on the crowd meant killing friend as well as foe. They did, however, shoot five or six Kaffirs and then rode forward as hard as they could to the Coerney camp and reported the dreadful news. A Hottentot boy who accompanied the escort as *achterryder* (*i.e.* a servant to lead or take charge of spare horses) fled back in terror to Mr. Stockenstrom's camp, arriving about two o'clock in the afternoon. Immediately, Ensign Andries Stockenstrom, son of the murdered landdrost, set out with eighteen men to the scene of the massacre. The spot, Doorn Nek, where it happened was reached by ascending a hill. On arriving at the top, the Kaffirs were discovered, evidently preparing to go forward to attack the camp and probably not knowing or thinking that the report of their crime could have become so soon known. They were taken unawares by the party of Boers. Finding themselves caught in the open and with a deep glen separating them from the nearest bush or cover, they retreated in panic. Fire was opened upon the disorderly mass with the result that sixteen were shot and eight

horses of the murdered Boers were retaken. When, however, the enemy discovered the smallness of the force which was attacking them, they rallied and endeavoured to circumvent the party and cut off their retreat. This was prevented and Ensign Stockenstrom and his men got back safely to their camp. From the movements of the hostile Kaffirs it was thought that an attack on the camp was intended. As soon, therefore, as the party returned, the waggons were so disposed as to afford protection to the ammunition and render the place capable of defence against large numbers. No attack, however, was made.

On the arrival of the twenty-five Boers at the Coerney camp with the news of the attack, a strong detachment, including the above-mentioned men, set out immediately under the command of Captain Fraser, and marching over the place where it took place, reached Mr. Stockenstrom's camp. Having effected a junction with that force, the whole then concentrated at Coerney. Colonel Graham, in a private communication dated January 2nd, 1812, gives the details of the operations up to that date. The letter was written from "Jokamma, ten miles N.W. of the mouth of the Sunday's River," probably near the site of the present Addo Station on the Port Elizabeth line. He says: "The whole of the Kaffirs within the limits are evidently under the absolute control of Slambi, and are determined to make an obstinate resistance. On the 27th, when the centre division had reached to near Habana's kraal on the south side of the Riet Berg, I received a despatch from Major Cuyler stating that the advance guard of his division had not proceeded 500 yards on this side the Sunday River when three assegais were thrown from behind the bushes, one of which wounded a farmer, but the Kaffirs could not be seen. The Major then proceeded to Congo's Kraal. The chief was not visible, but all his troops were drawn up in battle array, and ornamented with crane feathers, the emblem of war. By the messages Congo sent, he appeared inclined to follow the advice given to him, of quietly retiring to his own country, and was therefore allowed till next day to consider it. Next day, however, many of Slambi's Kaffirs were observed going toward the wood where Congo lay, and that evening a number of Kaffirs making their appearance on the side of the wood next to which the

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Major's division lay, he rode towards them with twenty-five men to try to persuade them to retire beyond the Fish River, giving up to us all Hottentots, slaves, horses, stolen cattle and guns. Old Slambi's figure was immediately recognised standing up, and advancing a few paces from the rest, when in great apparent agitation he called out, 'Here is no honey, I will eat honey and to procure it shall cross the Rivers Sunday, Coega and Zwartkops. This country is mine' (stamping his foot violently on the ground), 'I won it in war, and shall maintain it.' Having finished this pithy laconic oration, he with one hand shook his spear, and with the other applied a horn to his mouth, and on blowing it, his troops, 200 or 300 in number, rushed towards the major, who with an interpreter only had advanced within fifty yards of him unarmed, and the same distance from his own party, on whom he retreated and ordered them to fire. This unfortunately from its being almost dark had no other effect than making this insolent and daring crew retire to the wood.

"It was ascertained that Slambi had arrived that day, and that Congo's messages were only intended to amuse until that event took place. The Major having also informed me that the main body of the Kaffirs had assembled round Slambi and taken possession of a large wood into which they had driven a number of cattle for their subsistence, and from which the Major's division alone could not possibly drive them, together with my being convinced from all the information I have received that if Slambi was expelled, the rest would follow, I immediately resolved upon uniting as large a force as possible in this quarter, and accordingly on the 27th sent orders for two companies of the Cape Regiment to join Mr. Stockenstrom from the Hooghte on the north side of Zuurberg, and for him to cross that mountain and Riet Berg, and join me on the south side of the latter mountain without loss of time after the companies had joined his commando of farmers who were also to accompany him. . . . Before daybreak the 30th I sent Captain Frazer of the Cape Regiment with 100 farmers to convey the same orders I had previously sent, and on the 31st the two companies of the Cape Regiment and fifty men under Ensign Stockenstrom joined my division. Captain Frazer's party had been attacked three times by a party of Kaffirs in a narrow

defile leading through a wood, the farmers behaved with great bravery, killed about twenty Kaffirs, but three horses were killed by assegais. . . . The left and centre divisions I marched into this position yesterday, and altogether four companies Cape Regiment with the artillery and twenty dragoons, forming a corps of 800 effective men. The wood in which the Kaffirs are lies close to us. Several parties from Major Cuyler's division have had skirmishes with them, killed about twenty, and driven 400 head of cattle out of the wood. My intention is now to attack the Savages in a way I confidently hope will leave a lasting impression on their memories, and show them our vast superiority in all situations. I have ordered 500 men to enter the wood on foot to-morrow morning, divided into six companies, and with orders to continue in the wood while a Kaffir remains alive, and to bring off all their cattle, which when they choose to quit our country shall again be restored to them. They never were attacked on foot, or in a wood before, and in woods the assegai is a miserable weapon, as much room is required to throw it with effect.

"I never in my life saw more orderly, willing and obedient men than the Boers, and whenever they have been engaged have behaved with much spirit, and always most ready and willing to go upon any enterprise.

"(Signed) J. GRAHAM, *Lt.-Col.*"

The combined force formed by junction of the left and centre divisions marched south on New Year's Day of 1812 and joined the right division in the Addo Bush. On the 3rd, six parties, each consisting of sixty farmers with twenty of the Cape Regiment, entered the immense and almost impenetrable wood on foot. They had orders to fire at all men Kaffirs and to drive out all the cattle they could find. These operations continued for five days and were as successful as could well have been expected under the difficult and dangerous circumstances. About twelve Kaffirs were killed, among whom was Cungwa, who probably could do but little to help himself to escape, as, as has been stated, he was old and had long been in a very weak state of health. On the side of the Boers, the field-cornet, Nortje, was stabbed to death with assegais. Two thousand five hundred head of cattle were captured. The most



CHAP. satisfactory feature of the affair was, however, the evident disposition of the Kaffirs to retire eastwards to the Bushman's River, though the spoor of very many turned in the direction of the Zuurberg and Rietberg.

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The increasing extent of country which this latter move made it necessary to operate in, besides the protection which had to be afforded for the waggons, ammunition and captured cattle, rendered further military assistance imperative. In a despatch to Lieutenant-Colonel Reynell, military secretary to Sir John Cradock, dated January 8th, 1812, Colonel Graham represented the inadequacy of the force at his disposal for this purpose and asked that 200 additional men might be sent from Cape Town. In the meantime attempts were made to follow up the advantage which had so far been gained. After the death of Landdrost Stockenstrom, his son Andries, then a youth of barely twenty,<sup>1</sup> was put in command of the Graaff Reinet burghers. With these and the contingent from Tulbagh, he had orders to march to the Upper Bushman's River and scour the bush as far down as the drift on that river known as Rautenbach's Drift. This was successfully accomplished. At Rautenbach's Drift the whole of the moving force met. Major Cuyler with the right division then made their way through the bush along the western side of the Bushman's River, while Captain Fraser with the centre division scoured the bush on the eastern bank. Ensign Stockenstrom with his burgher force went on ahead and operated in the jungles of the Kareiga, Kasouga and Kowie Rivers. None of the divisions met with any resistance, however, or came to action. On discovering that Ndhlabi had retreated, Colonel Graham went in pursuit of him as far as the Kowie River, but found that the chief was well ahead and had crossed the Fish River about January 15th. Further, there was evidence that that wily chief had encouraged Cungwa to make a show of resistance in order to cover this retreat. The death of Cungwa and the retreat of Ndhlabi was followed by a general exodus of all the Zuurveld Kaffirs into Kaffirland. Hence, on January 31st, Colonel Graham was able to report that the whole of the coast country between the Sunday's and Fish Rivers was cleared of the savages who had for so many years been so great a scourge.

<sup>1</sup> Born July 6th, 1792.

But the work was not yet complete. Habana and those petty chiefs who had practically declared themselves independent of Ndhlabi, together with their followers and a great number of those Kaffirs who had been driven from the Addo, were still in the intricate fastnesses of the Zuurberg and Rietberg chain of mountains. There remained, therefore, the difficult task of dislodging these and driving them forth. In compliance with the request for further military assistance, a detachment of 200 men of the 1st Battalion of the 60th Regiment arrived in Algoa Bay on February 3rd. These men served in the defensive operations and thus liberated the whole of the Cape Corps for the work for which they were eminently fitted, namely, the guerilla warfare of the bush. On February 12th the whole of the disposable force met at the Rietberg. On the 13th two large infantry divisions were formed, one to scour the kloofs, ravines and all places which could afford concealment for the savages on the north of the mountains and the other for those on the south. Parties of mounted farmers were detailed to patrol the flat country at the bottoms of the kloofs in order to intercept Kaffirs driven out by the others. The movements extended as far as the Sunday's River, a distance of forty miles and were completed in twelve days. Being the hottest time of the year, the work of ascending and descending the acclivitous places and struggling with the thick and tangled bush was excessively fatiguing, yet, as Colonel Graham said in his report, "it was performed with a cheerfulness, zeal and perseverance which nothing could surpass". About thirty Kaffirs were killed and about a 100 women and children taken prisoners. These latter were sent in charge of an escort to Bruintjes Hooghte and thence to Kaffirland. About 600 head of cattle were captured. On February 24th the force returned to the place from which it started.

By the first week in March the war was practically at an end: and for the first time since Europeans and natives had been in contact, the Eastern Province was completely cleared of Kaffirs. The struggle lasted barely two months and was accompanied by probably less loss of Kaffir blood than was usual in one of their own tribal fights. Short as it was, however, it might have been even shorter and accomplished with small expense had it taken place at an earlier date, when the

CHAP. Kaffirs had not so extensively established themselves in the  
VIII. Colony, and thus saved much of the misery and suffering which the Boers endured on their account. The success which attended the movement must have been an object-lesson to all in what was possible with the right kind of man as governor of the Colony and proper and fearless measures taken to suppress anarchy and disorder. And the lesson which the Kaffirs learnt on this occasion, namely, that they could be dislodged from their most secluded glens and woody fastnesses, was far more wholesome for them than tons of beads and buttons.

In England these necessary hostilities were regarded with scant approval. The statements and sentiments expressed in Mr. Barrow's writings seemed still to influence those in authority to the exclusion of the numerous accounts of Kaffir aggressions which were contained in the many despatches received from the Colony. Lord Liverpool, in writing to Sir John Cradock in December, 1811, remarked that the general interests of the Settlement would be better promoted by taking measures of precaution against the marauders and repelling their intrusions when made than by resorting to general and offensive hostilities; and, evidently in ignorance of the real circumstances of the relations which existed between black and white, he further suggested that it should be distinctly ascertained "that the aggressions by the Caffres are not measures of retaliation, and that they (the Caffres) are not justified in some measure by the conduct of the Dutch Settlers who reside contiguous to their Territories".

The Kaffirs having been driven to the east over the Fish River, it was realised that in their unsettled state and from their naturally adventurous and predatory disposition no reliance could be placed upon the assumption that they would remain there. It was therefore decided to establish such a general system of precaution and defence as was best calculated to prevent them from returning. Until final arrangements could be made, with a view to this object, all the regular forces then on the frontier, with the exception of one troop of cavalry and the detachment of artillery, were, at Colonel Graham's request, permitted to remain. The burghers who had taken part in the war were allowed to return to their homes, but were replaced

by 300 others, including a new detachment from George<sup>1</sup> and a contingent from Stellenbosch. Besides a general system of patrols, small parties, each consisting of about ten men, were stationed at points best situated for protecting the surrounding districts. But neither these nor the forcible expulsion of the Kaffirs produced the intimidation which was desired, for so soon as the end of April many were once more in the Zuurburg, and two attempts were made to drive off cattle; in both cases, however, the animals were recovered. About this time also some returned to Bruintjes Hooghte, within the limits of the Colony, and formed a kraal. Mr. Maré, the provisional landdrost of Graaff Reinet, visited them by the orders of Colonel Graham and requested them to retire—which they refused to do. When however a commando under the Commandant Pretorius approached they promptly complied with the order. In consequence of this Colonel Graham deemed it necessary to direct that all straggling Kaffirs found in the Colony should be shot at sight, and sent messengers in order to disseminate as far as possible the knowledge of this order among the natives themselves. As a step towards the prevention of the recurrence of the dangers and depredations which it was hoped had at last ended, Sir John Cradock decided that the whole of the Cape Regiment should remain permanently stationed in the Zuurveld, and instructed Colonel Graham to select for the military headquarters some suitable spot which also should admit of a number of settlers establishing themselves upon it. On May 3rd, Colonel Graham fixed upon a site which appeared adaptable to these purposes. It was the old farm Noutoe, now Table Farm, which had been abandoned in April, 1810. On the 6th the Cape Regiment was moved to it and building operations were commenced. Before these

<sup>1</sup> On March 20th Colonel Graham wrote from Uitenhage to Mr. Van Kervel, the landdrost of George, informing him that the hundred George burghers who had taken part in the war were being sent back to their homes. But as he wished to form a chain of posts to guard the frontier, it was necessary that the inhabitants should co-operate with the military. He therefore directed Mr. Van Kervel to collect seventy-five others, who were to be supplied with provisions for two months, exclusive of what would be required on the march to the Fish River, to march off immediately on the arrival of those who returned. The new contingent was to serve for two months, but Mr. Van Kervel was instructed to have seventy-five more with provisions as above in readiness to proceed to Uitenhage should the state of the country demand their presence.

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preparations were complete, however, doubts arose as to whether the site was as satisfactory as had at first been supposed. The primary object in view was to have all parts of the irregular curve which is described by the Fish River easily accessible in a day's march from the headquarters. Ensign Stockenstrom who was well acquainted with the country, seems to have suggested that Noutoe did not possess this advantage and recommended to Colonel Graham a reconsideration of the question. In consequence of this, the work was stopped and further investigations made. Mr. Stockenstrom says:<sup>1</sup> "After a few days' rest and reconnoitring the position, Colonel Graham ordered me with a party of my men to escort him over the vicinity. I took him direct to an old farm called Lucas Meyer's, which had been abandoned by the owner, and burnt by the Kaffirs; thence he ascended the southern ridge, whence he had a complete view of the coast and the lower part of the Fish River to its mouth. We next returned to the old kraals, examined the springs, then galloped across the flat to Governor's Kop, then called Rand Kop, where he had a most extensive view of the Keiskamma, the Tyumie, the Kat, Koonap and North Kowie Mountains, as well as the Upper Fish River as far as Esterhuis Poort. I pointed out to him the exact position of Trompetter's Drift and Hermanus Kraal, but humbly suggested that Meyer's was a more commanding position. He objected to the weakness of the water. I knew none stronger in the country. We galloped back to Meyer's, then off-saddled and took some refreshment under a tree, now near the centre of Graham's Town. Once more we started, again ascended some high land overlooking the country and the coast, and after some discussion with the members of his staff, the Colonel said: 'I prefer this to Nantoo (Noutoe). It is a pity so much has been done there. At any rate, here we must have our headquarters immediately, and let those old walls'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Autobiography*, vol. i., p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> This old house, which formed the beginning of Grahamstown, and which had been the homestead of the "Leenings-Plaatz" or Loan Farm, De Rietfontein, was situated in the present Church Square, a few yards from the Cathedral Chancel, on the right hand side as one approaches the Railway Station (see plan of Grahamstown in 1814, p. 269).

The tree referred to was a large mimosa which stood in the middle of High Street about opposite the present Post Office. It was a characteristic feature of

(the ruined burnt remnants of the Boer's house near the tree above noticed) 'be covered in for the officers' mess.'"

In accordance with these instructions, the work connected with the establishment of the cantonment in its new position began early in June. The old house of Lucas Meyer was re-roofed and put in a state fit for use as an officers' mess; and for the accommodation of the men, eighteen temporary huts—three rows of six each—were constructed at a little distance to the west, in fact, in a diagonal direction across the ground which at present forms the end of High Street. Near these, stables for the dragoons' horses were built. The command of the Zuurveld post was conferred upon Colonel Lyster by Colonel Graham, who as soon as these matters were satisfactorily arranged, left the frontier and proceeded to Scotland on his own private affairs.

The officers built for themselves small houses upon plots of ground which were pointed out to them by Colonel Lyster. These plots are the sites of all the buildings which at present form the longer sides of the irregular triangular space known as Church Square. On the northern side were the plots taken by Major Fraser (two plots), Ensign Patton, Major Prentice, Lieutenant Ledingham, and Surgeon Milton,<sup>1</sup> which extended from the site of the Standard Bank to the top of Hill Street. On the southern side of the indefinite street then formed were Lieutenant Rosseau, Lieutenant Bell, two vacant plots, Chaplain van der Linge (or Lingen) and Assistant-Surgeon Glaeser. Lieutenant-Adjutant Hart (afterwards Robert Hart of Glenavon, Somerset East) appropriated a square plot facing the men's huts and situated a little below where the Anglo-Boer War memorial now stands. The officers hoped that these lands would be granted to them in full possession by the Government. In this they were not disappointed, for on application to Sir John Cradock, he said: "In consideration of the services of the Cape Regiment upon the present occasion, and as a mark of the acknowledgment of Government, I am happy

Grahamstown in the early days. It was the object of much care and veneration and was known as "Graham's Tree". It grew to large dimensions and was eventually blown down by a violent gale of wind in August of 1844.

<sup>1</sup> These erven are to-day numbered from one to seven on the municipal map of Grahamstown.

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to confirm to the officers as stated by name on this query, the lots of ground and the houses they have built upon them, which shall be made over to them by the Deputy Landdrost as their own property and which they may dispose of as they may think fit". The officers, however, were not to consider these places as their permanent quarters, as they might be called upon to remove at any time to a site nearer to the barracks which were in contemplation, or to any other situation at the pleasure of the Government.

To the embryo town thus formed a name was officially sanctioned on August 14th, 1812, by the following Government advertisement :—

"His Excellency the Governor and Commander in Chief is pleased to notify and direct that the present Head-quarter Cantonment of the Cape Regiment, situated in the Zuure Veld, which is also to be the future Residence of the Deputy Landdrost of Uitenhage, shall be henceforward designated and only acknowledged, by the name of GRAHAM'S TOWN, in testimony of His Excellency's Respect for the Services of Lieutenant-Colonel Graham, through whose able exertions the Kaffer Tribes have been expelled from that valuable District.

"CASTLE OF GOOD HOPE, 14th August, 1812."

Thus, *virtute et opera*, Grahamstown came to be.

#### APPENDIX TO CHAPTER VIII.

Colonel Graham's "description of three Military Posts around which it is recommended to plant a Population".

"1st. The Head Quarters of the Cape Regiment, and formerly a Loan Farm occupied by the deceased Lucas Meyer, is situated one mile from the source of the Kowie River. The spot selected on which to build the barracks is on an elevated tongue of land, formed by the Kowie and another stream which joins it below the barrack, and both of which streams can be led over almost every part of said ground, by which, including the whole space under the level of the water course from where the dams must be constructed, downwards, 20 or 30 acres of land may be irrigated. Both these streams may also afford irrigation to 40 or 50 acres of gently sloping ground which forms their banks, on the sides opposite to those on which the site of the barrack is chosen; above the watercourse on those sides

(and also on the banks of the Kowie below the junction) there is a gentle ascent varying from a quarter to three quarters of a mile in extent, from the bed of the river upwards, every bit of which is well calculated for tillage. Higher up still, although the hills are too steep to be ploughed, they produce excellent pasture for cattle at all times, and for sheep in summer. The Kowie River here runs easterly through eight or ten miles of a similar description of country, and is here and there joined by little streams of excellent water, issuing from the small and generally well-wooded ravines by which this beautiful valley is intersected. There is abundance of excellent timber within two or three miles of the cantonment and some very good close to it. The roads leading to this place are tolerably good and capable of improvement.

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"Distance calculated to be about				miles
" From Graaff Reinets	.	.	.	160
Uitenhage	.	.	.	86
The Sea	.	.	.	40
Great Fish River	.	.	.	20."

(NOTE.—The barrack and site here referred to is that of Fort England.)

"2nd. Kasouga. The source of the river of that name, formerly a Loan Place of Commandant Piet Lombard, now occupied by one company of the Cape Regiment. From the spring which is close to the post flows a copious stream of good water, and by constructing a dam a little below the spring in the narrow ravine through which the stream runs, a portion of land may be irrigated sufficient to afford small gardens for from ten to twenty families. This spot is situated on a very fertile tract of country, which affords excellent pasturage for cattle, and with the exception of the ravines which occasionally intersect it, all very fine corn land. There is plenty of good timber in the vicinity of Kasouga, the roads leading to which place are good, or can easily be made so. It is reckoned to be nearly, by waggon road—

" From Uitenhage	.	.	.	90 miles
Head-quarters	.	.	.	30 "
Great Fish River	.	.	.	40 "
The Sea	.	.	.	10 "

"3rd. Noutoe. A Loan Place on the banks of a river bearing that name, and at present occupied by half a company, Cape Regiment, the family of the Field-Cornet De Lange and three others. In very dry seasons this stream, it is said, does not run constantly, but



CHAP. there are many bare pools in its course which always contain plenty  
VIII. of excellent water. Here about 50 acres may receive the benefit of irrigation. There is a vast extent of arable land which also yields excellent pasturage for cattle and sheep at all seasons of the year. Plenty of fine timber is to be procured in the neighbourhood of this place. The road from hence to Bruintjes Hooghte is excellent, that to Uitenhage tolerably good and may be improved. Noutoe is situated about eight miles in a north-westerly direction from Headquarters, and twenty miles west from the Great Fish River."

(NOTE.—This is at present the farm, Table Farm.)

"General Remarks. 1st. Every description of fruit and vegetables are stated to be produced on each of the above-mentioned places in great perfection.

"2nd. There appears every reason to suppose that very fine hemp may be produced in almost every part of the Zuurveld.

"3rd. Water mills can with great facility be constructed at each of the spots above described.

"(Signed) J. GRAHAM, *Lt.-Colonel.*"

At these and the other posts which were temporarily established, Colonel Graham, before leaving the frontier, made provision for their general protection as well as that of the districts in which they were situated. In his "Instructions to Commanders of Posts," he says that the principal duty of the troops will be to scour and patrol every wood and bush which might serve as a place of concealment, and every poort in the neighbourhood of their respective posts through which a Kaffir can approach. "The faithful performance of this will be arduous, but it is hoped that by these measures the savages will soon be induced to give up all hopes of successful plundering. As so much depends on locality, unforeseen circumstances, etc., a great deal is left to the judgment and discretion of officers and non-coms., but the following are to be strictly adhered to: Officers and men are to make themselves perfectly acquainted with the country between their post and the next in every direction, and have a thorough knowledge of all roads, paths, kloofs, etc. To guard against surprise, and therefore to carry guns when going for wood, water, etc. Experience has shown that no mercy is to be expected from the Kaffirs; they are very cunning and only attack in open day when their enemy is off their guard. Piquets are to mount every evening at sunset, and be ready at any time to turn out. Nothing white is ever to appear on any man required to turn out at night. If a post is attacked the men are to turn out without noise or confusion and all regularly. No man to fire unless sure of his aim and never more than half the

party to be unloaded at once. Double sentries to be posted at night and never to go far from the kraals or houses, and to be frequently changed. The enemy never to be pursued at night, except in moonlight and in open country. All bushes in the immediate vicinity of a post to be cleared away. Frequent patrols to be sent out from each post, the strength according to the nature of the country and number of men at the post. Patrols to be perfectly silent and to conceal themselves as much as possible. Parties when concealing themselves at places where Kaffirs are likely to pass, are not to make a fire. Spoors of men and beasts are to be studied by all, and every man is to accustom himself to look for them. Notice to be instantly given of the trace of any fresh Kaffir spoor to the officer commanding, and this to be followed until it is ascertained that it passes out of the neighbourhood of the post. On traces discovered going westward, notice to be given to the posts best situated to overtake or intercept the invaders. On such notice being received every effort must be made to overtake the Kaffirs. Any of the men going about without shoes to make a cross here and there on their tracks in order to show that it is the track of a friend—the sign to be occasionally changed as required. An escort of infantry to escort orderly dragoons when danger is apprehended. The families and property of the inhabitants is under the protection of the troops and every assistance is to be rendered them. If necessary, a guard must assist in guarding the flocks, particularly at night. This is to be particularly attended to by the posts along the Great Fish River. On notice of theft of cattle, immediate notice is to be sent from post to post towards the frontier and every effort made to recover them. All Kaffirs and their followers seen within the limits to be considered as enemies and dealt with accordingly, except those bearing communications from their chiefs. The only crossing place is at William Van Aardt's ford on the Fish River (*i.e.* near the present Longhope Siding—the district of Bedford was then Kaffirland). All prisoners to be well secured and forwarded to Uitenhage. All Hottentots and slaves without passes found at a distance from a dwelling and not giving a satisfactory answer to be dealt with as Kaffirs."

The above is very considerably abridged from the original. The document is signed "J. Graham, Uitenhage, March 30th, 1812".

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE NEW SYSTEM OF LAND TENURE.

CHAP. IX. THE Zuurveld having been cleared of the scourge which for so many years had rendered those fertile parts, as well as the contiguous country, a region of constant strife and danger, the necessity of re-peopling the abandoned places with the least possible delay became obvious. To this end Colonel Graham issued, on March 20th, 1812, a circular letter to the landdrosts instructing them to induce the refugees to return to their farms, and at the same time wrote to Government suggesting that all arrears of rent should be remitted. The inhabitants were assured that such a system of defence was to be established in the regained territory as would afford effectual protection to both life and property. Those who, on receiving this intimation, neglected to take immediate possession of their former places, were to have their leases cancelled and their lands given to others. All this, however, was scarcely necessary, for, before the people could have been aware of the colonel's intentions, the greater number of the loan places from the Bushman's River to the north of the Zuurberg and as far to the east as Noutoe were reoccupied. In thus encouraging the resumption of the loan places, Colonel Graham was quite ignorant of the steps for abolishing altogether this form of land tenure which had, for some time, occupied the attention of not only Sir John Cradock, but also Lord Caledon. It must have been with some surprise therefore that he learnt that Sir John Cradock disapproved of his instructions to the landdrosts and had issued a countermanding circular. It soon transpired that the whole question of land tenure in the Colony had been undergoing the fullest investigation among the confidential servants of the Government, and that changes of some magnitude were pending. The virtual abandonment of the Zuurveld regions by the farmers and the expulsion of the Kaffirs formed

a favourable opportunity for introducing the contemplated change into those parts. The view taken by the Government was, that, in consequence of the inhabitants having been driven forth by the natives, it had thereby become lost to them, and, further, as it had been recovered by the force of the king's arms, the Government was competent to begin afresh and introduce a new order of things. No title to land founded on former possession was to be recognised; in other words, all loan places were to be considered as finally cancelled and resumed. According to the new system, instead of a return to the isolated places, where unprotected individuals offered temptations to plunder and were incapable of mutual support, it was decided that the grants of land (which in future were not to be on loan) should be smaller and as near as possible to the military posts which were to be established. It was further hoped that, by this means, not only would encouragement be given to agricultural improvement and cultivation in preference to grazing with its concomitant indolent life, but also, that the farmers and troops would become mutually dependent, the former having a market for their produce and the latter a certain supply of provisions. Colonel Graham's letter to the landdrosts and the prompt return of the people to their loan places somewhat upset these calculations and robbed the problem of its apparent simplicity. As Sir John Cradock was reluctant to take any action which might have the appearance of reversing Colonel Graham's measures, he permitted such individuals as had returned to their places on the authority of the colonel's circular to remain, and promised that the greatest attention should be paid to their cases in rearranging the grants of land under the new tenure shortly to be established. In the end, however, the Zuurveld differed in no respect from the rest of the Colony in the facilities it offered for the introduction of the new scheme.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following is an unofficial or private letter written by Sir John Cradock to Colonel Graham in explanation of his action. This letter is one of a large collection of Colonel Graham's correspondence now in possession of Sir John Graham of Cape Town.

" Private.

" NEWLANDS, April 2nd, 1812.

" MY DEAR SIR,

" I am in hopes that Mr. Alexander's public letter may have sufficiently explained my general wishes in respect to the settlement of the frontier. I regret

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The new system of land tenure which Sir John Cradock considered the altering circumstances of the Colony demanded and which he himself was actively engaged in instituting, was that of PERPETUAL QUIT RENT. (In virtue of this, an individual desiring farm or other lands obtained the same from Govern-

much that they do not seem to coincide with the opinions you have expressed but I cannot act otherwise with the feeling of inconsistency, as I have long since made known my resolution not to grant any more loan places, which I conceive to be the foundation of all that is bad and confused in this settlement. I have laid the whole matter before His Majesty's Government and only await their authority to adopt a general change in the tenures of land upon the broad basis of equal advantage to individual and Government. The former proprietors of these loan places had abandoned them for the most part ten or twelve years ago, and were they to resume them as a matter of right (which no loan proprietor has the shadow of) it would perpetuate an evil that has produced all the weakness and disorder that has hitherto prevailed on the frontier. I am at the same time ready to pay every liberal attention to any pretension to favour that any person may possess, and whatever you represent upon the subject shall be implicitly complied with. If it be necessary to give very large tracts of ground, I will do it, but let it be by measurement and on quit rent (surely the better title than the former) and I will even forego the payment to give the amplest scope to his activity and industry, for several years. In fact, my dear Sir, I wish to introduce upon the frontier another order of things, whose security, good order and confidence may appear established. I know how necessary it is to insure [<sup>?</sup> illegible] the population, which I shall endeavour to do by every attractive principle I can put in movement. It will be my wish also to extend as much as is practicable the settlement at Algoa Bay, as the chief point from whence the improvement and general security of the Frontier is to arise. I only take the liberty to throw out in the most summary manner these outlines, and I shall feel myself indebted to you in the highest degree if you will give me your ideas and assistance in the most unreserved manner. The view of all the Dutch systems from the very beginning was to extend and scatter the habitations. I conceive it will be the credit and strength of all the English proceedings to take the opposite course, and concentrate the population to form villages whose mutual aid can be given, and the seeds of civilisation take their root. All this I am aware must be the work of time, but on that very account the sooner we begin the task the better. Were all this view of the case even not present to my feelings and judgment, still it becomes my duty to pursue this course, for I am commanded by His Majesty's Government, to introduce a new system of conduct among the old settlers of the interior, and put an end to the reports (whether true or false I do not pretend to say) of cruelties and oppressions in the remote districts beyond the cognizance of Government. I have it much at heart to place in civil and military control upon the Frontier a person of the highest character and confidence in whom the Government may repose a most perfect reliance, that every beneficent measure of the British Government is realised, and one who will have no other view but the character and prosperity of this district, perhaps the most valuable part of the settlement. When such a person may be found it will be my duty to represent his value and services to the British Government, and procure for him such an appointment and establishment as may be due to the good he cannot fail to promote and secure. The whole tenor of the instructions you will receive by this dispatch are certainly pre-emptory and as such I cannot but say I wish you to consider them. . . ."

ment on payment annually of a small rent, depending upon the value of the land at the time the grant was made. The rent was very small, though considerably higher than what had been paid on loan places. It was regarded more as a recognition on the part of the tenant of the paramountcy of Government than rent in the ordinary sense of the word. The great difference between the new tenure and the old one of loan place and fifteen year quit rent was, that in the former case, the lands were not resumable at the pleasure of Government but were the properties of the holders, who were able to look upon them as their own estates and as a provision for themselves and families which no future ordinary event but only want of industry and proper management could injure or render unproductive. ¶ On the loan place and fifteen year quit rent tenure, on the other hand, a tenant might be called upon by the Government to vacate the land on expiration of the lease, though, as will be shown later, this was a very rare occurrence. It was said, that in consequence of the tenants holding in view the possible loss of their possessions, a sense of insecurity was thereby created which impeded improvement and restricted industry to that which was required to ensure only the enjoyment of immediate profits.)

✓ (The whole question of land tenure in the Colony was raised in the year 1810, during the governorship of Lord Caledon, on account of a dispute which arose in connection with certain grazing lands claimed by the executors of one Laubscher, deceased. It was not clear by what right and title Laubscher had possessed the lands in question, an adverse decision was therefore given by the landdrost of the Cape district, before whom the case was brought. An appeal was made to the governor. This led to an investigation into not only the validity of all claims of a similar nature but also into the wider consideration of land tenure throughout the Colony. It soon became evident that many landed possessions were held on tenures which would ill bear the investigation to which they must be subjected under a regular and efficient Government. The matter having been brought by Lord Caledon before the notice of the Home Government it was referred to a committee of the Privy Council. The question was complicated by the state of affairs in Europe at that time. Until the

CHAP. IX. conclusion of a treaty of peace between the conflicting nations and a final adjustment of foreign possessions, there could be no certainty as to whether Cape Colony would remain a British possession. Consistent, therefore, with the Law of Nations, their lordships decided that there should be no sale of land or absolute alienation of territory during a temporary possession by conquest. In the meantime, however, they approved of the general principle of such tenures as should induce the holders to apply capital and industry to the improvement of the soil, and were of opinion that the rents should be proportionate to the value of the places, and not, as before, invariably the same, regardless of extent and natural advantages. These views were expressed in a despatch to the governor, and were to be regarded not so much as positive instructions but as general principles to be kept in view in devising new regulations.

*Dutch by law*  
 The cause of the unsatisfactory state of the land tenures of the Colony at the time under consideration will be better understood by reviewing shortly the procedures, in this connection, of the Dutch East India Company from their earliest settlement at the Cape. In 1654, two years after Van Riebeeck landed in Table Bay, permission was given to some of the Company's servants to use, for a period of three years and without payment of any rent, certain small plots of land for garden purposes. It was understood that these grants were only loans. With a view, however, to encouraging agriculture, a condition was attached that all land which at the end of that period had been cultivated to the full extent of its capability, should be granted to the holder in "Eigendom" or freehold property. In accordance with this, the first alienation of land took place on October 10th, 1657, when a grant of about twenty morgen (forty acres) situated "in the great field on the pass between Table Bay and False Bay" was made to "Jacob Cloeten, of Cologne, free burgher of this place". In this is seen the beginning of the tenures of Leenings or loan places and also that of freehold property. There was another kind of tenure illustrated in the grant to Jacob Cloeten. Adjoining his land, though not included in his grant, there were some irregular small plots along the Liesbeek River, the addition of which made the other land of greater value. Permission was given

to use these in conjunction with the freehold, but they were to be considered the property of the Company. This renting or borrowing, from Government, land adjoining private property is the tenure known as "Leenings Eigendom". It became common in subsequent years. CHAP.  
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After a time, the gardeners became more enterprising and added the keeping of cattle to their agricultural pursuits. This necessitated larger appropriations of land, and these, like the smaller ones, were also held on loan from the Company, and, as far as is known, without rent. (As these loan places were only nominal cessions resumable at the pleasure of the Government and as the population was scarce, no surveys seem to have been made, and no concern shown when the grantees gradually extended their indefinite boundaries into the adjoining territories. ✓ The main object of the Netherlands East India Company being to procure provisions for the visiting ships, the haphazard system which gradually came into existence seemed best fitted to ensure the necessary produce from the soil and a better supply of cattle than could be depended upon from the natives. The remission of rent, however, did not arise from principles of altruism as probably more than its equivalent was demanded in tithes of the harvests and other duties. With the unforeseen development of the Colony and the consequent increasing expense of the Government, the establishment of some organisation and fixed principles in the granting of land at length became necessary. Hence, in 1703, in order to derive more direct revenue from the land, permission to occupy a loan place (which had to be renewed annually) was obtained upon a stamp of Rds. 6 and an annual rent of Rds. 24 was charged,<sup>1</sup> and further in 1714 an annual tax or "Recognitie" of Rds. 24 was levied. The annual renewal of the permission to occupy a loan place created a feeling of insecurity of tenure which discouraged industry and retarded improvement. In order therefore to obviate this, a new tenure was introduced in the year 1732, namely, that of fifteen year quit rent. On this tenure lands were resumable by Government only at the end of fifteen years, when in the event of resumption taking place the buildings (Opstallen) were to be paid for

<sup>1</sup> See Blue Book, C 30, 1876.



CHAP. on valuation. The rent, unlike that on the loan places, varied  
IX. with the capability of the soil and other natural advantages and was usually from four to eight skillings per morgen (1 skill-ing =  $2\frac{1}{4}$ d.). The "Recognitie" of Rds. 24 had also to be paid, as an acknowledgment of "de Heer behoudt zyn recht," that is, the sovereign remains the rightful lord of the soil so long as no part of it is granted in absolute freehold.<sup>1</sup>

In this same year also an attempt was made to control the abuse of encroachment upon the lands contiguous to those which had been "loaned" by issuing, on July 1st, a prohibition of such procedure. The measure, however, met with no success, probably on account of the difficulty of enforcing the dictates of Government in the distant districts. To this same end, namely, limiting the rights of the holders on loan as well as making the tenure still more secure, a further measure was proposed in 1743. It proved abortive, but is still of interest in that it foreshadowed the tenure of perpetual quit rent eventually established in 1813 by Sir John Cradock. The proposal was to convert the loan places into grants of the same nature as the "additional" lands adjoining the freehold properties, that is, into perpetual loans or Leenings Eigendom. A sum of money, depending upon the value of the land, was to be paid at the outset and then annually the usual Recognitie of Rds. 24. To check the unlimited extent of the grant, a careful survey was to be made, a diagram drawn and a complete understanding between the Government and the landholder established by the issue of an Erfgrondbrief or title-deed. As, however, the grants were to be limited to sixty morgen instead of the customary nominal 3,000 nothing came of the proposal. (The dwelling and other buildings on a loan place were known as the Opstal. It was competent for one man to sell his Opstal to another, and the purchaser was allowed by Government to continue the lease of the land, though he obtained no legal right thereto. "The grant of a renewal of lease was never refused to a purchaser or legatee."<sup>2</sup> )

<sup>1</sup> Blue Book, C 30, 1876, p. 7. These grants continued up to the year 1811, the last grant on this tenure being made on June 1st of that year. In 1821 there were still 207 holdings of this description, but they gradually became converted into freehold or perpetual quit rent.

<sup>2</sup> Letter of the Fiscal, W. S. Ryneveld, January 24th, 1812.

In 1790 a transfer duty of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent was put upon the sale of an Opstal. - CHAP.  
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(Of the land tenures above enumerated, the loan place,<sup>1</sup> owing to its inadequacy of payment (all places being rated at the same value), the indefinite boundaries and encroachments, was the most defective and unsatisfactory, yet five-sixths of all the holdings in the Colony were of this kind. This loose system was most consonant with the inclinations and methods of the Boers, who were therefore loath to see it changed. Hence Sir John Cradock found himself in a difficult and delicate position in 1812, when he was confronted with about 3,000 applications for land on the popular tenure and when he had determined that loan places, that "profane waste of land," should be wholly discontinued.) Considerable impatience had already been manifested by the applicants in consequence of the delay which the consideration of this question was producing. As has already been stated, the new tenure which was proposed was that of perpetual quit rent. This seemed most conducive, in the first place, to the interest of Govern-

<sup>1</sup> A typical document functioning as "title deed" at this early date

*Translation*

Permission is hereby granted to the farmer Lucas Meyer to squat with his cattle for a whole year on the farm called "Jammel's Fonteijn" situate on the other side of the Gamtows River on the Bosjesman's River, on condition not to disturb any one already squatting there, in consequence, being bound, before registration, to deposit as recognition, with the Hon'ble Company the sum of sixteen Ducats of seventy-two stuivers each or twenty-four Ryksdaalders and to renew this permission within a month after its expiration, subject to penalty attached to it, being likewise in duty bound to contribute the tenth part (or portion) of the wheat reaped, to the Hon'ble Company in this Castle, and to deliver the same to the Landdrost Pieter Diederik Boonacker

In the Castle of Good Hope, June 4, 1786

(Signed) J. v. PLETTENBERG

Received (signed) J. J. le Sueur, entered by me (signed) A. v. Sittert, expired 29 Xbre. A.C.

1 year and 11 months in arrears.

Registd. to Nov. 29, 1778.

On this date Jan'y. 23, 1786, the arrear of four years has been paid by above named Meyer, together with the Stamp duty to the Hon'ble Company.

(Signed) C. v. DIEMEL, *Sworn Clerk*.

On this day Sept. 5, 1787, above named Meyer gives notice that he with prescience of his Excellency the Governor will leave the above named Cattle place; he being bound to pay the arrear of six years, from time to time.

(Signed) C. v. DIEMEL, *Sworn Clerk*.

*Note.*—Lucas Meyer afterwards obtained the farm De Reitfontein, now the site of Grahamstown.

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ment, in that, besides an increased and fair land revenue being produced, more extensive cultivation and improvement might be expected on account of there being no fear of resumption ; in the second place, to that of the individual, in that he was secured in the permanent and undisturbed enjoyment of the produce of his industry, and with the co-operation of both to the greater development of the Colony generally.

(The first definite move in the introduction of the new system was made by Sir John Cradock on October 16th, 1812, when he issued a proclamation enforcing the prohibition of the extension of loan places which had been promulgated in 1732. And, further, to discover the extent of the lands which had been legally held on loan, he ordered the holders to erect conspicuous beacons at the angles and thus make it possible to represent the grants by diagrams and to register them.

The tenure of perpetual quit rent came into force on August 6th, 1813. (On that date was published the famous Proclamation which commenced a new era in Colonial land tenure. In the preamble it is stated that the chief source of prosperity in the Colony is agriculture, that the success and development of this depends upon the certainty of tenure and that all the improvements of the soil and increase in fertility should indisputably belong to the holder. That "although the establishment of loan leases might have been suitable to the early state of this Colony, when the wants of Government were not foreseen, it now appears from experience, that the loan tenure is injurious to that certainty, so essential to the happiness and the interest of the inhabitants, and equally injurious to the public interest, by preventing the holders from appropriating as much of their means to the improvement and extension of agriculture, as they would do) in case they had no right of resumption to apprehend, and might dispose of the ground as they please, *by subdividing the same among their children, letting, selling, or otherwise alienating it in lots, cultivating it in the prospect of remote benefit, by the planting of timber, etc.* . . . having taken into consideration the great utility of no longer delaying the improved cultivation of land, by giving security to title, and of making the same, as speedily as possible, a general measure ; I have adopted the following determination : to grant to the holders of all lands on loan, who

may regularly apply for the same, their Places on PERPETUAL QUIT RENT".

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There are seventeen sections in this Act, the most important points of which are: no place shall exceed 3,000 morgen in extent, that is, the legal extent of the original loan places; "the holder by this grant shall obtain the right to hold the land hereditarily—to sell or otherwise alienate it"; Government reserves . . . mines of precious stones, gold or silver; other mines of iron, lead, copper, tin, coals, slate or limestone are to belong to the proprietor; the holders shall pay to the Public Revenue an increased yearly rent, to be prescribed according to the situation, fertility and other favourable circumstances of the land; all applications for the conversion of loan lands into perpetual quit rent . . . must be made within twelve months from the date hereof. "I feel the highest gratification in giving effect to these beneficent and paternal designs of His Majesty's Government; and persuade myself that the gratitude of the inhabitants of this Colony will be equal to the value of the inestimable gift thus extended to them on the part of the Crown, which, by graciously offering to their acceptance a perfect title to lands, that enables them to provide for their children and descendants, and dispose of them as they please, grants to them, in fact, possession of an estate, and the high character and station of a 'real landowner'. They will thereby abandon an unworthy tenure, unfitted to the growing prosperity of the Colony, and only suited to the earliest and rudest institutions of the Settlement."<sup>1</sup>

(The privileges and benefits which were to be conferred by this Act were not received with enthusiasm by those for whom they were intended. The year during which applications to become "real landowners" were to be made passed without any one such request being preferred. There was, in fact, scarcely a beginning in this respect during the few years immediately subsequent to the promulgation of the Act.) Sir John Cradock certainly issued 180 perpetual quit rent grants, but all were original and none of them loan place conversions. In the mind of the Boer, there was little to recommend the advantages of the new system when compared with those of

<sup>1</sup> Nothing is said in this Proclamation about the conversion of the *fifteen* year quit rent tenure into perpetual quit rent.

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the old. In the first place, the rents were vastly higher, they might be as high as Rds. 250 per annum, whereas the loan place rent was only Rds. 30 (including the stamp for renewal of permission to occupy). To very many who were in needy circumstances this was an important consideration. The "inestimable gift" of being enabled to subdivide a farm for the benefit of the children seemed a poor substitute for the procedure under the old system, whereby children, when old enough, arranged matters for themselves and obtained whole and undivided loan places. The delightful uncertainty of boundaries with the unmolested encroachment on the adjacent lands was a charm which would be dissipated by the accurate and unsympathetic land surveyor. The feature of uncertainty of tenure which was so emphasised against the loan place system was, also, not obvious to the Boer mind. His own observation and reflection taught him that this tenure was by no means so uncertain and precarious as was represented. The resumption of a loan place by Government was almost unknown; and when it had taken place in consequence of the land being wanted for some public purpose, the holder was indemnified on such a scale as to lead to the idea that the land was bought by the Government from the individual; for instance, the purchase of the farm of Widow Scheepers for the establishment of Uitenhage, also the similar case of Tulbagh. There was therefore nothing in former actions of the various Governments which could inspire want of confidence in the security of loan place tenure. The confidence of the loan tenant, however, did not consist in the certainty of any actual right, but only in the hope of meeting with that continued indulgence of Government, which as yet had been only rarely withdrawn and even then due compensation made. Still further reason for confidence in the security of the loan place was given by Government in the attitude adopted towards the duty upon the transfer of the opstal when it was sold or disposed of by will. Although a loan tenant could not sell the land but only the opstal, yet it became customary to pay such a price for this as led the purchaser to conclude that the land also was included, and Government committed itself by receiving duty on such sums as must have been obvious could not have been merely the value of, perhaps, a few wattle and daub buildings. "Govern-

ment knew very well that many premises consisting only but in a hut not worth more than 25 or 30 dollars were selling for 20,000 or 25,000 gulden. Government received the duties upon this sum, confident that it was not the mere opstal, but the real value or calculated utility of the place for which said duty was paid, so that not only the opstal but the *whole* place was virtually disposed of with the complete sanction of Government. When now the purchaser who *bond fide* had paid his 25,000 gulden and the duty upon it to Government, having also under the eyes and with the sanction of his Government *bond fide* acquired the possession of a loan place, and got the usual lease of it, I should suppose that such a man, fulfilling the obligation he lies under on his part, might then consider himself safe in the possession of his place, at least so far that he might reasonably expect not to be dispossessed from it on the part of his Government."<sup>12</sup>)

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On Colonel Graham's departure from the frontier at the end of 1812, the task of maintaining and developing what had been accomplished with so much labour and expense fell to the lot of Colonel Vicars. In appointing him Civil and Military Commissioner for the Eastern districts, Sir John Cradock recommended as the surest means of preventing a recurrence of the evils from which the country had recently been delivered, the complete cessation of all intercourse between the colonists and Kaffirs. Sir John acknowledged that from accumulated experience no faith whatever could be placed in treaties with the Kaffirs. He recommended the Boers to Colonel Vicars' care "as a body of people who with good dispositions, it is always to be recalled from the peculiarity of their situation, are yet unused to severe control and are even to be taught in a mild manner, the operation of the Law". Bethelsdorp was to receive that support and consideration which was due from Government and every good man to missionary institutions generally; "but I do not scruple to avow

<sup>1</sup> Letter of W. S. Ryneveld to Colonial Secretary, January 24th, 1812.

<sup>2</sup> For further information on Land Tenures, see the letters in *Records of Cape Colony*, particularly letter from Henry Alexander to Sir John Cradock, January 12th, 1812; letter from W. S. Ryneveld to Deputy Secretary Bird, January 24th, 1812; letter of Justice J. A. Trutter to Deputy Secretary Bird, February 11, 1812; also the excellent Report of the Surveyor General (Mr. A. de Smidt) for 1876, and the judgments in the case of *De Villiers v. Cape Divisional Council*, August, 1864, *Supreme Court Reports* by Mr. Advocate Buchanan.

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that the exercise and sole display of religion alone, without aiding in the general task of labour and industry, the appointed lot of all mortals, must be prejudicial to any country, and especially to this Colony, where, from the want of sufficient population, no man can be idle without positive injury". Sir John Cradock believed, at that time, that the results of the late war and the system of defence which followed it had established such a condition of general safety and freedom from the former troubles that prosperity and other blessings of peace had at last been secured to the frontier inhabitants. In this, however, as will be seen shortly, he was mistaken, for before even a year had elapsed he saw good reasons for thinking differently. The landdrosts of the more distant districts, interpreting the feeling of the inhabitants who were under their respective controls, suggested to the governor the expediency of dispensing with the personal services of the people in the defensive operations and taxing them for the support of those who lived nearer to the danger area and on whom the duties of defence must necessarily first fall. By this means the farming and other operations of those in the West would be unhindered, while some recompense would accrue to those in the East whose time would be partly occupied by patrolling and other semi-military duties.

Sir John Cradock approved of this and issued, on December 4th, 1812, a Proclamation ordaining that the following districts should contribute in the usual manner and in the most just proportions, the following sums, to be considered as an annual demand so long as necessity should justify it, namely, Cape Town, Rds. 15,000; Cape District, Rds. 10,000; Stellenbosch, Rds. 12,000; Swellendam, Rds. 10,000; Tulbagh, Rds. 10,000; and George, Rds. 4,000. Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet were, of course, exempted, as the personal services of the inhabitants of those districts could not be dispensed with. All the male inhabitants of the last two districts who were capable of bearing arms were divided into three "wagts" or watches. Each "wagt," while defensive operations only were necessary, had to be two months on duty and four months at home. These with the Cape Regiment (Hottentots) formed the organisation which endeavoured, though not with complete success, to keep the thieving Kaffirs at bay.

In the comparative calm which reigned—for a time at least—after the dissipation of the storm-clouds of war, attention could be turned to the more peaceful considerations of the development of the embryo towns and the creation of others. The occupation, by white inhabitants, of the Zuurveld east of the Sunday's River, that is, the territory which shortly before had been the resort of Ndhambi and Cungwa, was one of the first objects Sir John Cradock had in view. In order to induce people to take up farms in those parts, lands were offered to the first fifty applicants free of all rent for ten years, and at the expiration of that period, at a perpetual quit rent not exceeding half a skilling (1½d.) per morgen. Expedition being necessary in this matter, and as there were no regularly appointed land surveyors, the farms there, as well as in other re-occupied parts of the country, were pointed out by the landdrost or his deputy in the best way possible at the time, with a special and distinct understanding that the whole would undergo revision and proper measurement as soon as it was practicable.

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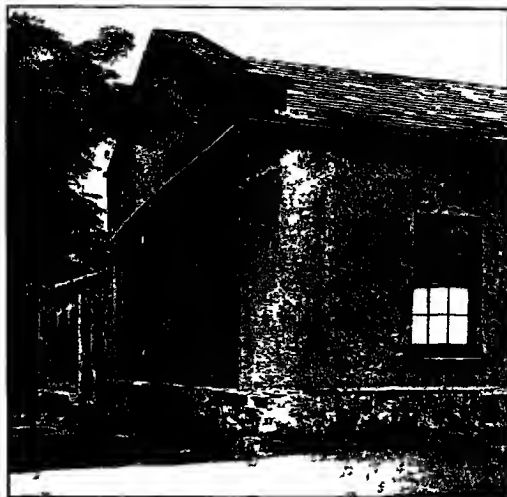
Very shortly after Colonel Graham had settled upon the farm De Rietfontein (afterwards Grahamstown) as the Zuurveld military headquarters, Sir John Cradock decided that that same place should also become a civil establishment and that the latter should be the predominant feature. It was constituted an appendage of Uitenhage and was controlled by an official subordinate to the landdrost of Uitenhage, known as the deputy landdrost. The gentleman first appointed to this office was Major George Sackville Fraser of the Cape Regiment. He was one of the officers who had moved from Noutoe with the regiment and one of the first who obtained permission to appropriate one of the pieces of land in the present Church Square, on which he built a small house. His appointment dates from July 10th, 1812. In November of that year, Major Fraser, in conjunction with Colonel Lyster, who was commanding the troops in Grahamstown, was instructed to select suitable spots on which to erect the necessary public buildings, the sites of which were to be preferably at some distance from the military quarters. The buildings themselves were to consist of a house for the deputy landdrost, a prison and accommodation for a messenger, a constable and



CHAP. two Kaffirs, and were to be erected at the least possible cost.  
 IX. They were, however, to serve efficiently the purposes for which they were intended. The money for this purpose was borrowed from the Lombard Bank on mortgage of the buildings themselves. The position chosen for these public offices was on the land near the drostdy end of the present High Street. One of the buildings erected at this date is still standing and marks the position. It is the long low house near the end of High Street belonging to the Public Works Department. As has already been stated, the military quarters were on the land nearly in front of the Cathedral. The salaries of the officials were fixed at Rds. 1,200 (£90) per annum for the deputy landdrost, Rds. 300 (£22 10s.) for each of the messenger and clerk, Rds. 180 (£13 10s.) for the constable, and Rds. 60 (£4 10s.) for each of the two Kaffir policemen. Besides these emoluments, the deputy landdrost was granted "from 20 to 25 morgen of land to be attached to the Drostdy for the exclusive use of the Deputy Landdrost," as well as a farm known as the Drostdy farm.<sup>1</sup> The messenger and clerk were also each allowed land for garden purposes.

In the erection of the public buildings of Grahamstown, the greatest difficulty was experienced in procuring the necessary workmen; this led to trouble with the contractors in the non-fulfilment of their engagements. The work was undertaken first by one and then another, each change leading to alterations and additions of the original plan, also to disputes with the retiring contractor, which in some cases led to interminable lawsuits, until finally a large sum of money was spent without all that was intended being carried into effect. There seems to have been only one man in the whole of the Uitenhage district in these days who was capable of undertaking any such work, namely, a Mr. von Buchenroder. He drew out the plans for the buildings as first proposed and tendered for their construction as follows: For the deputy landdrost's house, of stone, 60 feet long, 18 feet wide and 10 feet high, Rds. 7,000; for the tronk (prison), of stone, 45 feet long, 15 feet wide and 10 feet high, Rds. 3,500; and for the messenger's house, also of stone, 30 feet long, 18 feet wide and 10

<sup>1</sup> The Drostdy farm was that eventually known as Cypherfontein, near Slaai Kraal, about six miles from Grahamstown.



*Photo D. Dwy*

CORNER OF OLD HOUSE IN HIGH SIRLLI, GRAHAMSTOWN, SHOWING  
THE ENTRANCE AT THE END



*Photo. W. Rol, Esq.*

THE OLD DROSIDY HOUSE AT GRAVEL RINTLI





*Photo. C. Skead*

BETHELSDORP IN 1904.

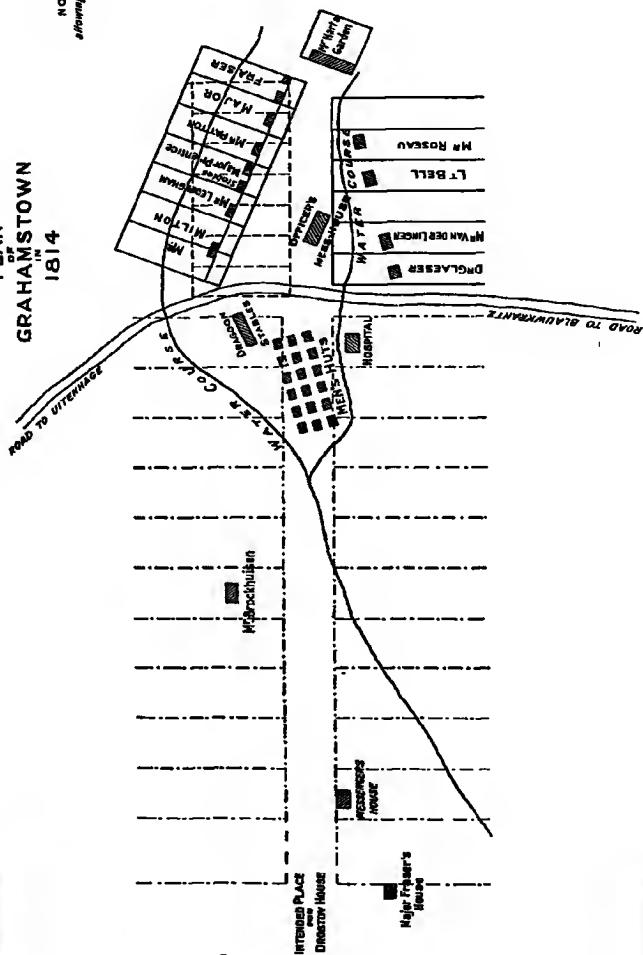


THE FIRST HOUSE BUILT IN GRAHAMSTOWN.





**NORTH**  
**showing no variation**



feet high, Rds. 1,500, making a total of Rds. 12,000 (£900). The governor approved of this, and on September 13th, 1813, Colonel Cuyler closed with Von Buchenroder on these terms.

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Grahamstown, which up to this time was little more than a name, and consisted simply of the camp of the few officers and men of the Cape Regiment who were not on outpost duty, was thus in possession of an administrative organisation. The next step towards the formation of the prospective town was to attract civilian settlers. To this end there was suggested, in the first place, an indefinite scheme of granting, at small cost, plots of land for building purposes. They were to be 50 paces broad and 150 paces long, the applicants for them to pay Rds. 20 (£1 10s.) to the District Chest when the grants in full possession would be made out in the usual manner. In 1814 this scheme took a more definite form in consequence of the possibility of enlisting the services of a properly qualified land surveyor. Mr. J. Knobel, who had been Secretary to Uitenhage, was gazetted Sworn Surveyor on January 22nd, 1813. At the beginning of 1814 he was sent to the lonely military camp for the purpose of properly laying out a township. At the time he commenced this work, Mr. Buchenroder had built the outer walls of the trunk and messenger's house almost to their intended height. The former of these buildings, though it is marked on his plan as the messenger's house, was taken as the starting-point of his measurements and the line of the main street. On comparing the proposed arrangements as shown on the annexed plan and following extracts of Mr. Knobel's letter with the present disposition of the streets of Grahamstown, it will be seen that the suggested scheme has been carried out. In reporting on his work to Government on June 10th, 1814, Mr. Knobel said:—

“According to your wish I have begun the survey of this place by tracing the line on which the messenger's house is now building, supposing that line to be made the south side of a straight street running from the spot where the Drostdy House is to be built, to the corner of the last lot as they are now standing, but as the execution of that plan seems to have some difficulties, I have thought necessary, previous to measuring any of the lots, to submit to you a sketch of this place as



CHAP. IX. it now stands. On the enclosed sketch<sup>1</sup> [see plan, page 269] the dotted lines represent the lines on which the messenger's house is now begun and the places which the officers' lots would occupy if they were brought up so far as to face a street made on that line. Now you will perceive that the lots, being laid down in that manner, would not only bring the buildings now standing in an awkward position, but throw some of them entirely with the property of another person; besides that inconvenience, the north side of the street would run just on the most elevated ground and the street would not be made wider than about 105 feet without interfering again with the buildings on the east corner lot."

After enumerating other difficulties and possibilities, he continues:—

"The only way therefore to escape at least some of these inconveniences, appeared to me to be the following, to keep, with a very trifling alteration, the line on which the messenger's house is now begun all the way down, for the south side of the street, only allowing an opening to the road going through between Dr. Glaeser's lot and the hospital, by which means the line of houses on the lots on that side would be brought up above the watercourse, whereas the houses now standing are considerably below it; in consequence, a good deal of the best watered ground is rendered useless. The north side of the street I would propose to run down from the Drostdy House to opposite the corner lot where the hospital now stands, leaving there a passage for the road from Uitenhage to come in, and the lots granted to the officers to remain as

<sup>1</sup> The original of this plan, which is now in the Albany Museum in Grahamstown, is somewhat defective. In the first place, there is no scale of feet shown. Secondly, Mr. Knobel has probably made a mistake in marking the building near the end of the main street as the messenger's house. Comparing measurements of the old house now standing in High Street and its distance from the end of the street with both Mr. Knobel's plan and the builder's contract, there can be little doubt but that that house is the one represented on the plan. This house was the prison and *not* the messenger's house. In any case Mr. Knobel ought to have shown *two* buildings if his plan truly represents "this place as it now stands," as, according to Colonel Cuyler's report of Mr. Buchenroder's building progress at this time, both houses were nearly beam high. The point is of interest, because if the house shown on Mr. Knobel's plan is the prison, then it establishes the fact that the old house now near the end of High Street is the first and therefore the oldest house in Grahamstown and existed before there was any High Street.

they are, only bringing them so far out as to allow them a space for building other houses in front of those now standing, and then from the opposite corners of the last two lots, a straight street might, if necessary, hereafter be extended in any length, which would be found most expedient, if in the direction marked in the sketch it would just bring the highest part of the ground in the middle of the street. This method would give the Drostdy House a view of the whole street, and although a triangular space would be left open, that space having the most elevated ground in its centre, might allow a very convenient situation for a church or any public building.”

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The general plan for the township of Grahamstown as suggested by Mr. Knobel was approved of by Sir John Cradock. It was then decided that the plots of building land, or erven, on both sides of the main street, now High Street, should be sold by public auction. The chief condition on which each erf was to be granted on purchase was that a good house should be built on the proper line for the street within eighteen months from the date of the sale. It was not to be less than thirty feet long, thirteen feet deep and eight feet high, and the walls to be of a good material such as stone, brick or mud (?); the purchaser failing to comply with this condition to forfeit all right to the erf, which would then be reconsidered public property. The public sale was held on May 8th, 1815. The prices realised for the plots were far in advance of those intended to be asked in the first instance<sup>1</sup>

It will be noticed that Mr. Knobel, in planning out the street and building plots, quite ignored the existence of the military encampment. He probably knew that it was merely a temporary measure, pending its more permanent establishment on some other site. When the huts were erected in June,

<sup>1</sup> The following are the names of the purchasers and prices at this sale: Lot 10, Carel Giese, Rds. 80, 20, Pieter Retief, Rds. 195; 21, E. Enslin, Rds. 181; 22, Lieut. Ledingham, Rds. 195; 23, Lieut.-Colonel Prentice, Rds. 300; 24, Major Fraser, Rds. 170, 26, Ensign van der Riet, Rds. 120; 27, Lieut.-Colonel Prentice, Rds. 100; 28, Gert Brockhuisen, Rds. 95, 29, Fred. Mocke, Rds. 61; 31, Piet Retief, Rds. 50. The title-deeds to these were issued on June 7th, 1816. The numbers of the erven mentioned here are those still adopted on the municipal plan of Grahamstown. On the right-hand side of High Street, looking towards the Drostdy Gate, and beginning at the Cathedral end, the erven are numbered in odd numbers from 15 to 33 inclusive, while those on the left hand are numbered in even numbers, from 14 to 32 inclusive.

CHAP. 1812, it was with a view to only a year's occupation at most.  
IX. In 1815, however, they were still standing and in use, but had become in such a dilapidated condition as to be beyond repair and in danger of being levelled to the ground by the next storm of rain or wind. It was decided, therefore, to remove the camp and to erect more permanent quarters on another spot. The new position chosen was about one and a half miles from the old one, and upon it substantial brick and mortar barracks were built. These are the buildings afterwards known as Fort England Barracks.

During the next three years the village made but slow progress. The few small houses which were erected in fulfilment of the conditions on which the erven were sold gave some semblance of a street. All progress with the public buildings entirely ceased. Mr. Buchenroder had also obtained the contract for the public buildings in Uitenhage and was devoting all his time and attention to these. Grahamstown was therefore neglected. In April, 1816, Major Fraser reported that the tronk and messenger's house were still not beyond the outer walls. Mr. Buchenroder was given until June 10th, 1817, to finish the work. At that date he had done nothing further. The Drostdy House was not only not commenced but no material even was in preparation. The matter was brought to the notice of Government when it was decided to pay, on valuation, for what had been done and to take the contract from Mr. Buchenroder. This was accordingly done, and some time then elapsed before the work was continued.

On January 7th, 1814, the DISTRICT OF ALBANY was created. It was defined as that portion of the district of Uitenhage which hitherto had been known as the Zuurveld. The deputy landdrost of Uitenhage therefore became the landdrost of Grahamstown, under whose jurisdiction the newly created district came.

The village of Uitenhage at this time was more fortunate than Grahamstown in its development. The prison, the building which seems to have been considered the first necessity in these eastern towns, was completed in October, 1812. Tenders for the construction of the Public Offices, namely, the Court House and houses for the secretary and messengers, were called for at the same time as those for Grahamstown.

Mr. Buchenroder's offer was accepted. The prices were, for the Court House, Rds. 8,000, for the secretary's house, Rds. 6,000, and for the messenger's house, Rds. 5,000, making a total of Rds. 21,000 (about £1,570). This sum was part of Rds. 500,000 which had been allotted by the British Government for the erection of public buildings throughout the Colony, and was issued through the Lombard Bank. To raise the money for payment of the interest on the portion granted to Uitenhage, a tax of one shilling per muid was put upon the salt taken from the natural salt-pan near Bethelsdorp and also one Rd. on every waggon load of wood cut in the district. Mr. Buchenroder, perhaps on account of the larger sum at stake, devoted all the energies of himself and of the few available workmen to the Uitenhage buildings, and completed them satisfactorily in the specified time, namely, by October, 1816. An area of 3,000 morgen, measured in the form of a square and containing the public buildings, was to be considered the commonage of Uitenhage. None of it, except small building plots near the drostdy, was to be granted to individuals applying for it. It was hoped thereby to establish more places and to incite the inhabitants to actual cultivation within a reasonable circuit around the drostdy. On the outskirts of the commonage, grants of land were to be made on as reduced a scale as possible. In the case of Grahamstown the commonage was fixed at 2,000 morgen. Sir John Cradock in fixing these quantities said: "The extent of these commonages may appear too large, but it is really necessary for the sustenance of the oxen and various other cattle that may be brought to rendezvous at these places, for without such accommodation and were the ground to be disposed of, all the desired communication and resort would be frustrated". The inhabitants of Uitenhage had long felt the want of a church and resident clergyman. They had voluntarily subscribed Rds. 4,000 and erected a building which was to answer as a temporary church until Government could provide something more adequate to their needs. This building functioned as a church and also as a schoolroom and eventually became the residence of the clergyman. In the end they obtained what they wanted, for Government granted to Uitenhage a further sum of Rds. 30,000 from the fund above mentioned for the church.

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In February, 1815, the career of Colonel Cuyler was very nearly brought to an abrupt close by the murderous hand of one of his Kaffir police. Sitting in his room one evening about eight o'clock, a police Kaffir named Cassie entered and handed a note to him. While he was opening it, the Kaffir stabbed him in the breast with a dagger. The wound, though dangerous, did not prove fatal. On examination at the trial, Cassie confessed that it was his intention to kill the landdrost as he (the Kaffir) was tormented with too much work.

When, for the better administration of the large district of Uitenhage, a deputy landdrost was appointed to be stationed at Grahamstown, a similar measure was adopted in the still larger district of Graaff Reinet, by the appointment (on June 10th, 1812) of Ensign Andries Stockenstrom as the deputy landdrost of that district. The choice of the site of the new drostdy was not so easy a matter as it had been in the case of Grahamstown. Court was held at one place and then another until June, 1813, when Mr. Stockenstrom, after first proposing Grootfontein, immediately near what is now Middelburg, finally decided upon the loan place of one Piet van Heerden, called Buffel's Kloof, in Achter Sneeuwberg. This was chosen because it occupied a fairly central position in the Graaff Reinet district, was well watered and had a good house as well as building material upon the spot. Negotiations were opened with Piet van Heerden for the acquisition of his place for Government purposes, and in the end it was bought for Rds. 3,500. Sir John Cradock, when he visited the East at the end of 1813, approved of the position and sanctioned an expenditure of Rds. 12,000 on the necessary public buildings. He was asked to allow the embryo town to be named after himself, and in reply said, "I feel much flattered by the proposition to give my name to the deputy drostdy and can only in return offer my best wishes for its prosperity".<sup>1</sup>

The problem which seemed to demand first consideration in the establishment of an Eastern Province town, namely, the

<sup>1</sup> The following is the official announcement of this. "Government Advertisement. Notice is hereby given that His Excellency the Governor and Commander in Chief at the particular request of the Landdrost and Haemraaden of Graaff Reinet, has been pleased to consent to the Residence of the Deputy Landdrost of said district being in future called CRADOCK, January 21st, 1814."

construction of the prison, was easily solved at Cradock. Piet van Heerden's house was found to fulfil every requirement in this direction as well as to afford accommodation for a constable and two Kaffir policemen; it was therefore appropriated for this purpose. The deputy landdrost's house was soon commenced and ready for occupation. As in the other newly founded towns, the contiguous land was divided into building plots and offered for sale. The dimensions of these erven, in general, were 130 to 150 feet frontage and length, depending upon quality, supply of water and other local circumstances. Ten or fifteen morgen were attached as garden for the deputy landdrost, besides which, in order to "render his position as comfortable and respectable as possible," he was authorised to attach a farm to the drostdy. The one chosen by Mr. Stockenstrom was the loan place, known as Driefontein, then occupied by W. J. van Heerden, Piet's brother. He parted with the place on being compensated by a grant of land in another locality and payment for the buildings at their proper value. Cradock, the fourth town in the Eastern Province, thus became established.

Although Graaff Reinet had been founded so many years earlier than the above-mentioned towns, it was scarcely even yet worthy of being regarded as a village. The Drostdy House was finished before 1814 and had by that year fallen into considerable disrepair. All other public buildings were either unfinished or not begun, and unsatisfactory temporary arrangements continued to be adopted. The all-important prison was in a ruinous state and little better than none at all. But though the temporal needs of Graaff Reinet were neglected, the spiritual seem to have been matters of concern, for the parsonage was a substantial, commodious and even elegant building, and is described as being not only on too large and fine a scale, but even better than the Drostdy House at Uitenhage. Part of the sum of money lent by the British Government was allotted to Graaff Reinet for the better establishment of the village, though not a sufficiently large amount. In order therefore to raise more, in 1814 the usual expedient of selling plots of Government land for building purposes was resorted to. This had the additional advantage of forming another street and thus increasing the extent of the village in

CHAP. IX. an orderly manner. The vacant land then extending from the river up to the present Somerset Street was surveyed by Mr. Aling, the Government surveyor for Graaff Reinet, and divided into thirty building plots. There were fifteen on each side of a street which was thus formed and which afterwards was named Cradock Street. These plots were put up to public auction and realised Rds. 23,329 (about £1,750).

On May 12th, 1815, Mr. Stockenstrom was promoted from Cradock to be full landdrost of Graaff Reinet, in place of Mr. Fisher, who had been appointed to that office after the murder of the elder Stockenstrom. The new landdrost devoted himself with untiring energy to the further improvement of the place. By 1817, the increase in population necessitated a more systematic arrangement to be adopted in the future disposition of the houses, and more definite, municipal regulations for the administration of the village. In February of that year, Mr. Stockenstrom formulated and carried into effect such a code. To give some uniformity to the streets, no one was allowed to commence any building until the site had been inspected by the landdrost in conjunction with the surveyor and the line of direction pointed out. For the better appearance and greater cleanliness of the streets, there were stringent regulations concerning the cattle and numerous pigs which appear to have encumbered them; others concerning the ditches and sluices which conveyed the water to the different erven and others dealing with arrangements conducive to the general health. No ovens were to be dug in the banks of the river.

But what of the improvement in the condition of the inhabitants with respect to freedom from depredation and unhampered farming pursuits while these towns were struggling into existence? Had the treatment the Kaffirs received in the beginning of 1812 so intimidated them that they feared again to cross the Fish River? Had they, with awakened consciences, quietly settled down in their own country and permitted the frontier Boers to enjoy unmolested the increase of their stock and the produce of their lands? Not by any means. As has already been pointed out, almost before the burghers had returned to their homes, parties of Kaffirs were again in the Colony and defied, at first, the attempts which were

made to drive them back. In spite of outposts and continued patrols, it was impossible to prevent them from returning. The extent and nature of the country to be guarded and the facility with which the Fish River could be forded at almost all places rendered it nearly impossible to prevent them from gratifying their inherent disposition to plunder. The dexterous approach of the marauders and the natural ability they possessed of operating on the darkest nights rendered all vigilance and defence of little avail. The result of this was, that, towards the end of 1812, Kaffirs were gradually finding their way back to the old haunts in the Zuurveld, or Albany, and the quarterly depredation returns indicated a revival of the old state of affairs.<sup>1</sup>

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The hopes which Sir John Cradock entertained at the end of the 1812 campaign, namely, that, on the recovery of the valuable tracts of land and the steps which had to be taken to protect them, the frontier farmers would be secure from predatory visits and that prosperity would at length dawn, were not, as these events showed, to be realised. Almost in despair, he afterwards acknowledged that the Kaffirs were apparently so devoid of all faith, and so intent by nature on plunder, that no treaty had any effect with them and that it was idle to attempt to persuade them that the Government was actuated by motives of honourable justice. As the state of affairs again became so grave in 1813, the governor decided to visit the East and investigate matters for himself. He left Cape Town on October 18th of that year and arrived at Assegai Bush, near the present village of Sidbury, on November 27th. Having learnt of the extent of the depredations during that month, he immediately issued orders to Colonel Vicars to adopt stringent measures. Colonel Vicars was instructed to communicate with Gaika and other chiefs and explain to them *afresh* what had been so often declared "that

<sup>1</sup> For the three months ending December 31st, 1812, forty-two cattle and thirteen horses were stolen. For the first quarter of 1813, one hundred and seventy-two cattle and nineteen horses stolen and one slave killed. For the second quarter, one hundred and one cattle and thirty-five horses taken and two slaves and one Hottentot murdered. For the third quarter, sixty-four cattle and twenty-one horses stolen, while for the four weeks ending November 20th, 1813, over a thousand head of cattle were taken from the farmers near the border and five Hottentot servants murdered,



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our object alone is to preserve the boundaries of the Colony". Sir John further wrote, "I therefore have to desire you to act with the small force under your orders in the most vigorous manner in your power; that you will try to do something, as far as prudence will permit, that will prove to these savages and unceasing robbers that His Majesty's Government can no longer be trifled with, and that we will not suffer, with the power in our hands, the prosperity of this whole and invaluable Province, and indeed of the entire Colony, to be destroyed".

The whole of the burgher force from Graaff Reinet and Uitenhage was again called out. The commendable devotion to duty and the unhesitating manner in which the harassed Boers seemed always to respond to the call to defend their country was well instanced on this occasion; for on November 30th, that is, within two days after most of them had received their orders, and in the case of many much less, all had assembled at the Baviaan's River ready to proceed into Kaffirland. The Graaff Reinet burghers were led by Mr. Stockenström, while the command of the whole force was under Major Fraser, as Colonel Vicars, on whom this duty devolved, met with an accident and was compelled to remain at Van Aardt's post. The boundary was crossed on December 2nd. The parts of the country contiguous to the border, which were known to have been inhabited a few days before, were found deserted as the Kaffirs, probably by means of their spies, had become aware of what was in progress. On the evening of the 3rd, the force encamped on the Kromme River. Seven Kaffirs who were driving a large number of cattle approached the camp and enabled Major Fraser to hold communication with them. He ordered them to go to Gaika and the other chiefs and to tell them that he demanded immediate restoration of the stolen cattle and horses. Although they promised to do so, they drove their cattle into the woody fastnesses and gave no indication of obeying orders. During the next day, the march was continued to the mountainous country at the source of the Kat River. Seven other armed Kaffirs were met with during the day. Major Fraser at first gave orders to fire at them, but as they approached of their own accord, and seemed unaware of any such intention, the order was countermanded. They were, however, taken prisoners; their assegais having

been taken from them, they were made to accompany the force in order that they might witness the proceedings with a view, on their liberation, to communicating to other Kaffirs the object and procedure of such expeditions. Six were eventually liberated, while one escaped, and, it was believed, was shot in doing so. The commando did not proceed farther into Kaffirland than the Kat River and Mancazana as Major Fraser was afraid of exceeding his orders. In the forests of those parts a large number of cattle, which had been driven there for safety, was found. Between 2,000 and 3,000 were driven forth and from them 140 marked Colonial cattle were picked out. With these the force returned to the Colony, after having accomplished next to nothing and having made, perhaps, the feeblest demonstration in the whole history of Kaffir warfare.

In the extended tour which Sir John Cradock made, he visited many out-of-the-way places in order to gain an insight into the actual condition of the frontier. From Assegai Bush he went to Lombard's Post, *near the present village of Southwell* and thence across the Kowie River as far as the mouth of the Great Fish River. Returning, he arrived in Grahams-town about December 3rd and then proceeded to Uitenhage, where he remained about a week. From Uitenhage he journeyed to Graaff Reinet and then back to Cape Town, arriving there on January 7th, 1814. From the careful survey and observations he was thus enabled to make, he was greatly impressed with the difficulties and dangers attending life in the Eastern Province. In the memorandum of this tour he said: "It is not only distressing to the view but painful in the reflection that so eminently fertile a part of the Colony, instead of partaking in the general and progressive prosperity of the settlement, should altogether have lost, as it may be termed, its political existence and that, at this advanced period, we should have a task of fresh creation". He assured himself that the unceasing depredations committed by the Kaffirs upon the farmers were *not the result of offending conduct on the part of those inhabitants*, but of the want of a more effectual mode of protection than had hitherto obtained. Acting upon this conviction, he decided, when he was in Graaff Reinet, to augment the Cape Regiment to its original strength of 800 rank and file, that is, to add 200 men to the number which at that

CHAP. IX. time constituted the regiment. The Hottentots had so abundantly shown that, from their activity and constitution, they were the troops best adapted to act in the woody tracts that skirt the Great Fish River. The number was readily obtained by issuing circular letters to the landdrosts throughout the Colony asking them to furnish a proportionate number from their respective districts. In spite of this increase in the Cape Regiment, the circumstances of the inhabitants were not greatly improved. The number of armed farmers relieved from military duty was not so large as it was hoped to have been. The apparent disposition of the Kaffirs rendered frequent patrols and constant guard still necessary at the important drifts of the Fish River. In February, 1814, a large body of Kaffirs established themselves on the Colonial side of that river and were with some difficulty and not without bloodshed driven back to their own country. Ensign MacNiel with a company of the Cape Regiment was nearly surrounded in this attempt, and not until a brisk fire had been opened and fifteen Kaffirs shot, did the others retire.

Besides the misfortunes with which the Eastern Province was afflicted in consequence of the proximity to Kaffirland, there was also the disadvantage under which it laboured, in common with the remainder of the Colony, with respect to want of the means of education. The judges of circuit, in the lengthy reports of their observations on the condition of the country and inhabitants, which had to be presented to Government on the termination of their travels, drew particular attention to the ignorance and degradation which prevailed, and the hindrance to a higher state of civilisation which must necessarily ensue. The only instruction which had been available in districts at any distance from Cape Town, excepting that provided for the Hottentots by the missionaries, was such as was given by discharged soldiers and other individuals, too often of a doubtful character, who could get no other employment.<sup>1</sup> These made a scanty livelihood by moving from place

<sup>1</sup> Bad as this was, it was not unique in British Colonial history. Noah Webster writes of the American Colonies in the eighteenth century: "The most important business in civil society is in many parts of America committed to the most worthless characters. . . . Education is sunk to a level with the most menial services. . . . Will it be denied that before the war it was a frequent practice for gentlemen to purchase convicts who had been transported for their crimes

to place as teachers and varying the tedium of the schoolroom, as Barrow tells us, by occasionally lending a hand at the plough under the supervision of the more experienced Hottentot. In the royal instructions which were issued in appointing the different governors of the Colony, there were clauses directing the respective governors to report to the Secretary of State their opinions on the steps advisable for the establishment and maintenance of schools, and to give particular attention to the morals and proper qualifications of the persons who were to be licensed to keep a school in the settlement. In pursuance of these instructions, Earl Caledon suggested, in 1809, that a public school should be established in each drostdy; but no definite steps seem to have been taken to bring this about. The question of education was one of the first public matters towards which Sir John Cradock turned his attention, and to which, throughout his term of office, he devoted his most zealous and unremitting endeavours. The information gathered by the circuit judges deeply impressed him with the immediate necessity of bringing about a better state of things in this respect. In their report for 1812, they stated that in the district of Graaff Reinet alone, there were 3,400 children of which not more than a hundred had any opportunity of instruction, while the parents of at least 2,000 of these were well able to afford the necessary expense for education. In fact, except at the few drostdies in the Colony and the houses of a few opulent individuals, no sort of instruction for young people was procurable. In 1812, under the authority of Government, a committee was formed in Cape Town known as the Bible and School Commission, the objects of which were to propagate a knowledge of the Bible and to control the education in the Cape Peninsula. It was composed of the clergymen of the different denominations in Cape Town together with some of the Government officials and was supported by voluntary contributions. Very shortly after its formation, it received support from and extended its operations to the whole of the Colony. It was really the beginning of a properly organised Education Department. In April, 1812, a circular letter was

and employ them as private tutors in their families?"—Webster's *Essays*, pp. 17-19, quoted in Lecky's *History of England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. iv., p. 32.

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sent to the different landdrosts asking for their opinions and suggestions as to the best means of providing instruction in their respective districts. As a result of this, it was decided to establish a school at each drostdy and at such out-stations as were found practicable.<sup>1</sup> These schools were to be managed by a local committee consisting of the landdrost, clergymen and elders, where such existed, but all were to be under the authority of Government and controlled by the School Commission in Cape Town. For the supply of the necessary teachers, it was proposed to appoint the church clerks and other individuals who, after due examination by the Board in Cape Town, were found competent. In order to render the combined office of church clerk and teacher independent and respectable, there was to be an annual allowance of Rds. 400 (£30) together with half of the school fees and a plot of ground for garden purposes. To raise the necessary funds in the different districts, a slight augmentation of the taxes, a *school tax*, was levied and was to be paid with the other dues at the annual opgaaf. These regulations came into force on January 1st, 1813. But little success attended them in the first instance. The requisite number of teachers of the desired standard of attainments could not be found, and some of those who took up the work soon became discontented in consequence of the difficulty of getting their pay. In the more remote districts, the sparseness of the population and the great distances between the farms made it impossible to establish a school in any one place, the teachers therefore had to move from place to place, live at the different farms and give such instruction as the time and circumstances permitted. There was, however, the further difficulty of attendance, for the poorer inhabitants—those perhaps most in need of instruction—were obliged to employ their children as soon as they were capable of rendering any assistance in the tending of cattle and other work. Of all the places in the East, Grahamstown seems to have responded most satisfactorily to these endeavours, and, even at that early date, to have taken the lead in educational matters.

<sup>1</sup> The places decided upon were Simon's Town, Zwartberg, Stellenbosch, Paarl, Zwartland, Tulbagh, Swellendam, Graaff Reinet, Uitenhage and George; to which were shortly afterwards added, Roggeveld, Hantam, Langekloof and Bruinjes Hooghte.

Sir John Cradock, speaking in February, 1814, on what had, up to that time, been accomplished, said: "the introduction of a very extensive school at the Head-quarters of the Cape Regiment in Grahamstown, to the amount of some hundreds of children, cannot fail to produce the happiest consequences". During his stay at Uitenhage, Sir John Cradock, in the detailed attention he gave to all matters concerning the welfare of the East, did not overlook the difficult question of Bethelsdorp. His proximity to the place enabled him to learn accurately the conditions and needs of that institution. Its overcrowded state and the consequent need of either reducing the numbers or extending the boundaries induced him to consider measures for some immediate relief. He was adverse to acting in any manner which might discourage or put difficulties in the way of the real improvement and civilisation of the Hottentots, but, on the other hand, he shared the general anxiety, that if the missionary stations were enlarged or increased in number, the most fatal results would attend all agricultural and farming pursuits from the lack of the necessary labour. On general principles, it seemed inexpedient to allot considerable portions of land to missionary stations and thus render the Hottentots independent of connection with their neighbours in a country where it was essential that all should work and combine for the common good. In spite of these sentiments, however, he granted to Bethelsdorp a fine tract of land in Albany, on the Kasouga River and extending almost as far as the Kareiga River, not with the idea of doing away with Bethelsdorp, but of creating an adjunct to it and thus lessening the number of Hottentots at that place. In writing, on February 12th, 1814, to the Rev. John Campbell, the travelling superintendent of the London Missionary Society, on this matter, he said: "To relieve Bethelsdorp and give the best chance of improvement to a place, not even designed by nature for a creditable or useful foundation, I have granted, as far as the circumstance is practicable (the legal difficulties of which you are well aware), the beautiful tract in Albany, to which we have given the name of THEOPOLIS, and I will hope that in this situation all the hopes and prospects of united Christianity and utility to the world, in which we now indulge, will be realised; such is the fertility and abundance of the place in every neces-

CHAP. sary of life, with wood, water and every material for building  
IX. at hand, that the very view will take away all excuse". In due course a number of families with their cattle and other belongings left Bethelsdorp, and under the guidance of the missionary Ulbricht, with his Hottentot wife, took up their residence, or perhaps, more accurately, squatted down, on the new domain. The missionary institution, or Hottentot village of Theopolis itself, was built in a wide shallow basin of land—scarcely deep enough and the declivity of the sides too gentle to be regarded as a valley—along the Kasouga River. It consisted of a number of separate houses or huts, each with its own garden, situated near the bank of a small stream. On the slightly higher ground to the east, were built the missionary's house, and at a distance of about fifty yards to the north, the church. The former, judged from the remains of the walls and foundations which now, in consequence of the prickly pear and overgrowth, can be examined only with difficulty, seems to have been fairly commodious and probably consisted of seven rooms. The church was a rectangular building about fifteen feet wide by about thirty feet long.<sup>1</sup>

Theopolis stood near the middle of a square piece of grassy fertile land measuring about 3,000 morgen, that is, about as large as the commonage of Uitenhage. The southern boundary was within a short distance of the sea-shore and the "blind" mouth of the Kasouga. It was well adapted for the purpose the governor had in view in allotting it, though it is curious, considering the solicitude the authorities had always shown to prevent coalition between the Kaffirs and Hottentots, that a spot so far to the east should have been chosen. Theopolis figures prominently in the history of the East and earned great notoriety for the London Missionary Society in South Africa. As will be recorded in its proper place, the whole of the "converts" and others, when their services were required to

<sup>1</sup> Accurate dimensions of this building could not be taken during a recent visit to the site of this mission station in consequence of the enormous accumulation of prickly pear. No vestige of any of the houses could be seen, but the prickly pear had grown in a very peculiar way and seemed to mark out the positions of the walls of the houses. There were clumps of this noxious weed in the form of more or less complete hollow squares of about the size the Hottentots' houses must have been. It appeared to have grown from the remains of the walls in or on the ground and to have derived therefrom some nourishment eminently conducive to its growth.

assist against the hostility of the Kaffirs, and after arms and ammunition had been issued to them for this purpose, rose as one man in rebellion and used the arms against those they were expected to protect. Theopolis then ceased to be.

In spite of the troubles which beset the Eastern Province in these early stages of its development, there were indications of the prosperity which might be realised under more propitious circumstances. The census returns for 1813 showed that, notwithstanding Kaffir depredations, there were more cattle in the district of Graaff Reinet than in any other; while in the case of sheep, the number in Graaff Reinet was greater than in all the other districts of the Colony put together.<sup>1</sup> It must be borne in mind, however, that Graaff Reinet was by far the largest district and comprised nearly one-third of the Colony. About this time an export trade in produce was commenced, chiefly with Mauritius. A firm of beef contractors, Pohl & Co., was established at Algoa Bay, from which place all the produce was shipped. At the end of 1812, 250 sheep and no less than 32,129 lbs. of butter were sent to Mauritius, while in August, 1813, to the same place the above firm shipped 2,000 casks of salted beef. All this raised the question of the establishment of a custom house at Algoa Bay, but nothing was done in this direction until some years later. Clearance of ships, taking imports to Algoa Bay, had to be made at Cape Town.

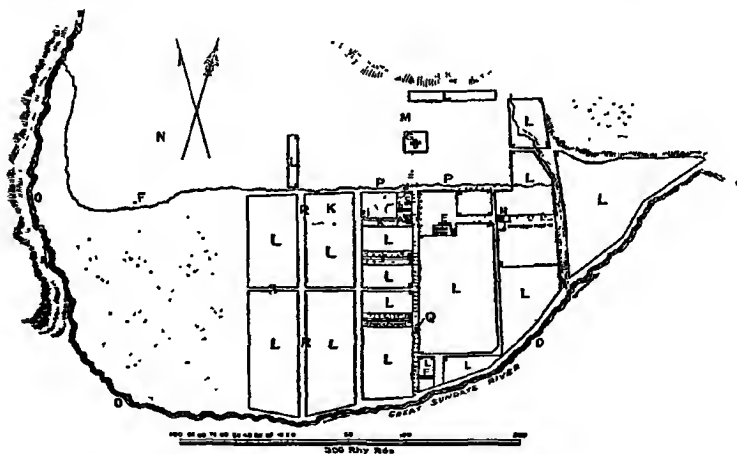
Early in 1813, Sir John Cradock applied for permission to resign his governorship of the Colony. On October 13th, Earl Bathurst replied, stating that H.R.H. the Prince Regent had accepted the resignation, and expressed his high sense of the services Sir John Cradock had rendered to the Colony during his term of office, and regretted that he (Cradock) had found it necessary to withdraw from the inhabitants of the settlement "a superintendence in which you have shown so much assiduity, judgment and ability, and which has been uniformly exercised with a view to their advancement in happiness and prosperity". The deepest feeling was manifested by all at the loss the country was about to sustain by the departure of so good a governor. Addresses, expressive of the

<sup>1</sup> The numbers given in the returns are: Total number of sheep in the Colony, 1,783,449; in Graaff Reinet alone, 1,039,473. Cattle in Graaff Reinet, 56,509. *Vide Colonial Records*, vol. ix., p. 299.



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<sup>1</sup>In the Royal Commission he is spoken of as "Our Trusty and Well-beloved Charles Henry Somerset *Esquire*, commonly called Lord Charles Henry Somerset".



PLAN OF GRAAFF REINET AT THIS DATE.

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| A Dwelling House and Office of the Landdrost.  | H Parsonage.                         |
| b Stables and Slave Quarters of the Landdrost. | I The Two Church Erven.              |
| cd Carpenter's Shop and Waggon House.          | K Land belonging to the Drostdy.     |
| E House of Substitute and Prison adjoining.    | L Land (Private Individuals).        |
| F Magazine (Blockhouse?) of the Drostdy.       | M Church Square.                     |
| G Church.                                      | N Government Land.                   |
|  | O Great Sunday's River.              |
|  | P Water leading from Sunday's River. |
|  | Q Church Street.                     |
|  | R Long Street.                       |
|  | S Dwars (Cross) Street.              |

## CHAPTER X.

### CONTINUED TROUBLE WITH KAFFIRLAND.

TUMULTUOUS as the Eastern Province had been for so many years, the arrival of the new governor inaugurated a period of still further discord and commotion. In addition to the causes of discontent and disorder which already existed, new ones, involving the affairs of the West also, came into being. Lord Charles Somerset, like his two immediate predecessors and also many of his successors, came to the Colony knowing little or nothing of its inhabitants and conditions; but, unlike Earl Caledon and Sir John Cradock, he lacked that tact and sympathy which were so essential to succeed with a people who, as yet, had not had time to forget their old allegiance and become British. He seemed moreover to entertain an exaggerated opinion of his own greatness. On the other hand, it must be said, that many of his measures and the sentiments expressed in his numerous despatches to Earl Bathurst indicate that, in his own peculiar way, he had the welfare of the Colony at heart. Unable to brook opposition and unwilling to listen to or consider proposals which did not emanate from himself, his conduct towards those beneath him became tyrannical. This could not but lead to trouble, especially when, in 1820, the British settlers arrived in Albany, bringing with them their notions of freedom of thought and speech. The strife between the emissaries of the London Missionary Society and Government became more acrimonious and, leading to mutual contempt and recrimination, sowed the seeds of further mischief and calamity. The whole twelve years of Lord Charles Somerset's government forms one of the darkest parts of South African history, and fitly terminated with a recall to England which was tantamount to his dismissal for maladministration. The various features of this period, in so far as they concern the East, have now to be presented.

The period when this change of governors took place was

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CHAP. X. one of severe financial depression in England ; and as the revenue of the Colony was not adequate to meet the necessary expenditure, the most rigid economy had to be exercised in the administration of the public funds. Earl Bathurst, in his letters to the governor, lost no opportunity of continually emphasising his concern in this matter. In order to increase the revenue of the Colony, Lord Charles Somerset, very early in his term of office, turned his attention to the further development of the natural resources of the country itself. In the first instance, tobacco was looked to as a product likely to form the basis of a profitable export trade.

There was in Cape Town at this time a Dr. Mackrill,<sup>1</sup> an enthusiastic botanist, who not long previously had arrived from America and who seemed to be a man eminently capable of furthering the governor's views. He was instructed to make a tour of the East for the purpose of investigating the possibilities of the country, and, if a suitable spot were discovered, of conducting experiments in connection with the growth of tobacco and agricultural development generally. After a journey of twenty-seven days from Cape Town he arrived in Uitenhage at the end of September, and then commenced a tour of inspection along the Little Fish River and Bruinthe Hooghte. He did not find it necessary to visit Albany, or other parts equally favoured by Nature, as the charms of the district of Uitenhage, which he described as the granary of the Colony, promised all he deemed needful. By the end of October he decided that the Boschberg (now Somerset East) was a place eminently suited for his purpose, and one the natural advantages of which would with difficulty be surpassed. He selected two farms, loan places, one of which was occupied by a farmer named Triegard, while the other, adjoining it, was occupied by one Bester. In reporting on these he said : " The approach to the farm is over a lawn seven miles wide and God knows how long, comprising at least a thousand acres of level rich land, clear as a park and covered with excellent sweet pasture. Arrived at the Boschberg, you view with delight the

<sup>1</sup> It was he who introduced buchu to the notice of medical men in England. The plant, however, long before his time had been in use in South Africa, nearly every housewife keeping a supply of it among the remedies for ailments (Theal, vol. 1795-1838, p. 221, note).

beauty of this mountain which bounds the north side of the farm; it has not an inch of useless ground, being covered with grass and timber to the summit. The arable part of the estate consists of two valleys of great extent and fertility; more than a thousand acres submit without trouble to irrigation, and by good management of the water-courses, leading them over the sides of gently rising hills, arable land can be had to almost any extent." On Dr. Mackrill's recommendation, Government resumed its right to these places, paying Triegard Rds. 2,200 and Bester Rds. 1,400 for the buildings and crops then standing upon them. Bester's farm was acquired on account of the spring of water from which both farms partly derived their supply. The whole therefore became a Government farm, and on January 1st, 1815, Dr. Mackrill with his family and dependants, numbering twenty in all, took possession. The place was found to have been brought under considerable cultivation by Triegard. This may have been the reason why the doctor was so impressed with its fertility and did not consider it necessary to continue his tour of inspection farther. He found 6,000 tobacco plants already planted and in healthy growth, two kitchen gardens well stocked with every useful vegetable, and about thirty waggon-loads of pumpkins. The scanty accommodation which the place offered was the consideration which required first attention. There were two low mud-houses, each forty feet long on Triegard's place and a small building constructed for a water-mill on Bester's. With such small beginnings Dr. Mackrill, in his day-dreams, saw almost unlimited possibilities and indefinite expansion in his new undertaking. The products of the soil, manufacturing industries, vast influence with near and distant tribes of natives, were all to combine to make the Government farm the source and *entrepôt* of the wealth of Cape Colony. He foresaw, in consequence of its proximity to Kaffirland, the establishment of a mart where extensive barter with the natives could be carried on, and where he himself, invested with special magisterial powers, would control a great traffic to the mutual profit of both black and white. The first step necessary for the accomplishment of these comprehensive schemes was the erection of further buildings. Accommodation had to be found at a very early date for the soldiers, European as well as those of the

CHAP. X. Cape Regiment, who were stationed on the farm for its protection. A barrack fifty feet long and fourteen wide was therefore built for the men of the Cape Regiment, while the Europeans were given one of the original buildings, which also had to answer as a carpenter's shop. The other mud-house was used as a store-room. Dr. Mackrill built a house for himself and family, four others for his workmen and also another small water-mill. The tannery, candle- and soap-making establishments were to have been erected at a later date. The important questions of the supply of stock and labour had next to be encountered. Dr. Mackrill, in the first instance, spent all the money he could afford on the purchase of cattle, but not to the extent which was necessary. He therefore wrote to the governor suggesting that capital from the public funds should be advanced for this purpose. "Considerable expense," said he, "must necessarily be incurred at the commencement of every great work, but, Sir, the land will bear it." The request was complied with and the place liberally subsidised by Government. The labour problem was not so easily solved. The doctor asked that "some of the unfortunate men at Robben Island and some small Hottentot children from that nest of idleness, Bethelsdorp, should be apprenticed to the farm where they would acquire habits of industry". Neither of these expedients, however, seems to have been adopted. On Dr. Mackrill's suggestion to Lord Charles Somerset "that the land merits Your Excellency's noble and ancient name," the farm was called the "Somerset Farm".

In June, 1815, as if to indicate what might be expected in the near future, the first consignment of the produce of the Somerset farm arrived in Cape Town. It consisted of 250 pounds of leaf tobacco and three small casks of twisted tobacco for chewing. It is not clear, however, how far this was the fruit of Dr. Mackrill's enterprise, or whether the credit was not in some measure due to the previous industry of Triegard. In either case, the sample did not come up to the doctor's expectations. He recommended, therefore, that it should not be sent to London, where it could scarcely earn for Somerset that respect which its potentialities merited, but rather that it should be disposed of in, and chewed by the people of, Cape Town. After this, the experiments on tobacco seem to have come to

an end, and Dr. Mackrill's attention seems to have been devoted entirely to the supply of provisions for the troops stationed on the frontier. Now all the supplies required for this purpose could not be, or rather, were not, produced upon the farm itself; hence recourse was had to purchase from the farmers in both districts. These purchases were made so as to admit of a profit to the farm. The Government farm, in fact, became a "middleman" between the producer, the farmer, and the consumer, the military. This very soon created considerable dissatisfaction among the farmers, who, seeing no reason why they should not supply the troops direct, as heretofore, at the better prices, refused to sell to the farm. In consequence of this, it was announced on October 3rd, 1816, that the Government had taken upon itself the supply of the troops on the frontier districts from its own farm, as far as its resources would allow, and declared that His Excellency was determined to visit with the severest penalties any person who should presume to throw obstacles in the way of the Government agent in furnishing the supplies, or who should not be found ready to lend the most effectual aid to a measure of such importance to the troops and the Colony. Dr. Mackrill was not long in discovering that the magnificent schemes of his visions were not in the least likely to be realised, and further, that he himself was less competent to carry the governor's views to a successful issue than a man of more ordinary ability and reasonable aspirations. He was entirely unable to manage or exercise any personal influence over the heterogeneous collection of people which formed his working community. Discord, leading to open mutiny, soon arose and threatened to kill the enterprise almost at its birth. The blacksmith, a discontented and turbulent fellow, was the leading spirit. He very soon became dissatisfied, refused to work and openly defied the doctor. The baker, sympathising with the blacksmith and believing himself also to be badly treated, refused to bake. Shortage of bread reacted upon the Hottentot soldiers. Their sergeant, probably arguing that no bread meant no work, told his men to take no orders from Dr. Mackrill and to do no work,—thus the demon of insubordination rode rampant through the settlement. The doctor reported these men to Captain Andrews at Van Aardt's post (now Longhope Siding), but received for answer that he

CHAP. X. (Captain A.) could not punish men for misconduct in a civil capacity, and that the men had been detached to Somerset not for the purpose of being employed as farm labourers, but for its protection. This mutinous conduct gradually spread to all, until, as Dr. Mackrill said in his report to Government: "All the influence I formerly possessed over the soldiery is totally vanished and every man does as he pleases, well knowing they have no punishment to fear". By April, 1816, the accumulation of troubles had well-nigh overwhelmed the worthy doctor. In that month he wrote to Lord Charles Somerset: "I am, my Lord, growing old very fast and do not possess that activity which is so indispensable for the promotion of Your Excellency's views". He asked to be relieved of his charge and recommended a Mr. Robert Hart as a fit and proper person to succeed him. This request was complied with, and the last mention of Dr. Mackrill, the founder of Somerset East, in the Colonial records is his memorial to Government in March, 1817, in which he prays that he may receive his salary for the period commencing September 1st, 1814, to December 31st, 1816, "making two years and four months in establishing and superintending the Somerset Estate at Rds. 2,000 per annum, total amount due to memorialist, Rds. 4,666.5.2". Under Mr. Robert Hart<sup>1</sup> there was no pretence of making the Somerset Farm anything else than an adjunct to the Commissariat Department. Besides monopolising the military market, it furnished the greater quantity of rations to the settlers of 1820 during the first two or three years. The manner of carrying on the business became a scandal and formed one of the accusations against Lord Charles Somerset in a petition which was brought before the House of Commons. It appeared that the farm was financed by the Colonial Government, while the supplies to the troops were paid for by the Home Government. And as large profits were made by the farm, money passed from the Home Government to the Colonial in a manner which was not suspected by the Lords

<sup>1</sup> He was one of the first who obtained small grants of land in Grahamstown. He had a square plot of garden land very near the present Church Square (see plan of Grahamstown, p. 269). When the town was planned out, the existence of this garden made it impossible to continue the street as suggested by the surveyor. Mr. Hart seems on that account to have relinquished it and to have taken in its place the farm land near Belmont Valley, now known as Sunnyside.

of the Treasury. In 1824, when it was announced that Commissioners of Inquiry were being sent out to investigate the real state of the Colony, and the several allegations against Lord Charles Somerset, the farm was suddenly closed down and the lands were formed into a township,—the present town of Somerset East.<sup>1</sup>

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When Lord Charles Somerset took over the governorship of the Colony, the whole of the indefinite northern frontier, extending from the Buffel's River, some distance south of Port Nolloth, across the country to the Stormberg Mountains, consisted of the boundaries of only two districts, Tulbagh and Graaff Reinet. Between that limit and the Orange River the country was uninhabited except by Bushmen and other nomadic tribes. On the farther side of the Orange River, there were tribes of a more settled disposition and possessing cattle. Beyond the northern boundary of Graaff Reinet, towards its western extremity, in fact, in Griqualand West, there was a people, scarcely worthy of the name of a tribe, known as the Bastards, and afterwards Griquas. They were descendants of Europeans and Hottentot women and had migrated to those parts from the Cape and other south-western parts of the Colony. They led a wandering life and were in almost as degraded a condition as the Bushmen. In the year 1801, a good and noble-minded man, a Mr. Anderson, one of the missionaries of the London Missionary Society, who arrived in the Colony at the same time as Mr. Read, went among them for the purpose of inducing them to exchange their wild and nomadic habits for those of civilisation. The task was one of great privation and danger, for in its first stages Mr. Anderson had also to wander about with the people and, besides enduring the starvation and thirst which were the results of remaining in such a country, he had also to share the general risk entailed in conflict with other tribes which roamed in these lawless regions. By 1804 he had so far succeeded in his good and unselfish work as to induce many of the people to settle down on a place then called Klaarwater, about a hundred miles to the west of the site of Kimberley. The place was afterwards

<sup>1</sup> See "Case of Mr. Bishop Burnett," Copies of Letters and Papers, ordered to be printed by the House of Commons, May 31st, 1826, p. 45; also *Records*, vol. xxix., p. 128.



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X. years Mr. Anderson worked there quietly and unostentatiously, until circumstances compelled a change in many of these far-distant mission stations. The whole of the long and useful life of this good man was characterised by a singleness of purpose and an absence of that desire for self-advertisement which, unfortunately, formed so prominent a feature in the disposition of some other workers of the venerable society to which he belonged. This mission station had not been established many years before it became a source of danger to the Colony. The Griquas and others readily settled down either at Griquatown itself or in its vicinity. As this place was beyond the limits of the Colony, and therefore outside its jurisdiction, Mr. Anderson was unsupported by any other authority and could exert no further restraint upon the increasing population than that which was derived from his own personal influence. Considering the wild character and the hard conditions of the lives of these people, it is scarcely surprising that they disregarded the advice and admonition of their good missionary, and took advantage of some opportunities of ameliorating their poverty-stricken condition which were fraught with danger to themselves as well as to those associated with them. Before long the Griquas, in their more settled condition, were visited from time to time by itinerant merchants from the Colony, whose object was to collect as many cattle as possible and to dispose of them at a profit in Cape Town. These men, usually not the most exemplary characters, had little concern as to whether, in their transactions, they sowed the seed of public harm or were a curse to all with whom they came in contact, so long as they gained their object. Men of this type seem always to have thrived in South Africa, especially during a time of war, when considerable wealth has been accumulated by furnishing the enemies of their country with guns and ammunition or swindling their own countrymen in the supply of provisions. Griquatown became the centre of a small cattle trade. Besides the usual harmless and useless trinkets, guns and ammunition were given in exchange. These latter tended to increase the business, for the Griquas themselves did not possess the quantity of cattle which was in demand, hence plundering forays on tribes more to the north commenced. To make

these matters worse, there was living at a distance of about three hours from Griquatown the famous Conraad Buys. It will be remembered that General Janssens had persuaded him to leave Kaffirland, where he had married Gaika's mother, and to return to the Colony. But when again the country came under British rule, the hatred which Buys entertained against the British induced him to flee to the north, beyond the limits of the Colony. He there associated with himself an enterprising Gonah Hottentot (*i.e.* the offspring of a Kaffir and a Hottentot) named Dantzer. These collected around themselves a considerable following of wandering natives of several tribes and led a free-booting life along the northern boundary. Buys came into frequent contact with the Griquas, not, however, with the idea of attacking them, but with a view to bending them to his own evil purposes, and his influence over them seems to have been greater than that of their missionary. Unfortunately, in 1814, a circumstance happened which tended greatly to increase this evil influence. When Sir John Cradock was endeavouring to strengthen the Cape Corps by directing the landdrosts to furnish twenty men from each of their respective districts, the landdrost of Tulbagh found it impossible to collect that number from his district proper. Although Griquatown could not be regarded as situated within the district of Tulbagh, as it was ten days' journey beyond what was then considered to be the northern frontier, Mr. Anderson received orders to send from his station "twenty Hottentots from seventeen to twenty years of age, eligible for military service." Willing as he was to support the Government, he found it entirely impossible. No persuasion would induce any of his people to undertake military duty in the Colony, and to use force, from the nature of his circumstances, was obviously impossible. The Cape Corps therefore received no support from Griquatown. Shortly after this, when Lord Charles Somerset had become governor, Mr. Anderson journeyed to Cape Town chiefly in connection with this matter. During his absence, Buys used the opportunity thus offered to instil into the minds of the Griquas the idea that the whole object of the mission station was to collect people together for the purpose of eventually forcing them into military service, and further he convinced them that they were an independent people and not answer-

CHAP. X. able to the Colonial Government. The freedom of Griquatown from all Government control, and the life so congenial to the habits of the Hottentots and slaves, made it a centre of attraction, so that desertions from service were frequent in all parts of the Colony and thus increased its population. "The place falls directly on the eye of every bad-intentioned person as a proper instrument to be used in a wicked design."<sup>1</sup> The illicit traffic in guns and ammunition increased while the prospects of doing any good as a missionary station diminished. Mr. Anderson, in writing to Mr. Stockenstrom in January, 1816, reported that many of his people were absenting themselves from the station, visiting the frontier and returning with guns, and he feared their intentions were bad. Complaints of the farmers at the loss of their servants were brought before Mr. Stockenstrom, and through him to the Government. In reply to these Mr. Anderson acknowledged that he had lost every shadow of authority over the people and expressed his anxiety at their disorderly conduct. He said there were 1,500 men capable of bearing arms of whom 300 possessed guns. Instigated by Buys, they had made attacks on distant tribes and returned with large herds of cattle. In 1818, Mr. Stockenstrom visited Griquatown and found matters as bad as they were reported. In his report to Government, dated August 27th, 1818, he said that plausible and praiseworthy as the objects of the missionaries were, they had too little control over the people, and that it was impossible for an unbiassed person to travel through the country without perceiving that an institution established for the purpose of propagating the sacred doctrines had degenerated into a cradle for the most serious mischief.<sup>2</sup> Griquatown continued, however, although restrictions were placed upon the traffic. In 1822 a political agent was appointed and stationed there.

Until 1814, no attempt had been made to civilise the Bushmen. In that year the London Missionary Society recommended that attention should be directed to the establishment of mission stations for the special benefit of that degraded race. Accordingly, Mr. Erasmus Smith, one of the missionaries of Bethelsdorp, applied to Mr. Fischer, the landdrost of

<sup>1</sup> Stockenstrom in report to Government, August 27th, 1818.

<sup>2</sup> See *Records*, vol. xii., p. 34.

Graaff Reinet at that time, for permission to proceed beyond the boundary of the Colony and to form a Bushman station at a place called Toornberg,<sup>1</sup> the site of the present town of Colesberg. It was not without some misgiving and doubt that Mr. Fischer brought the matter before Government for its favourable consideration. In the end, however, permission was given and two mission stations came into existence in those parts; namely, Toornberg under the superintendence of Mr. Smith, and Hephzibah—a few miles to the south—under a Mr. Corner. These places had not been in existence many months before good reasons appeared for regarding them with concern. Before the end of the year they were discovered by the Kaffirs, who, though they did no actual harm, created suspicion by wandering so far from their own country and made it doubtful how long peace would be maintained after the Bushmen had accumulated any cattle.

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Early in 1815 both places were visited by the ever-active Conraad Buys, and the minds of the people were filled with alarm by his falsehood respecting the pressing of the people for military service. The Bushmen, therefore, became suspicious of the missionaries' intentions and assumed so hostile an attitude that on May 15th, 1815, Mr. Smith wrote to Mr. Stockenstrom (who by that time had succeeded Mr. Fischer) asking for permission to return within the Colony. Although this was granted, these two missionaries remained at their posts about two years longer, until the turn of affairs at Griquatown raised the whole question of the expediency of permitting the existence of mission stations beyond the boundary, where the established law could have no control. On January 27th, 1818, therefore, Messrs. Smith and Corner received orders to retire within the Colony. This was done, and thus Toornberg and Hephzibah came to a end. It was argued that there was more work to be done in the Colony itself than could be accomplished by the missionaries then engaged, and though it might be reasoned, *a priori*, that a savage people beyond the frontier was better with a missionary than without, yet the collecting together of a large number of uncivilised people under no efficient control could not but be dangerous.

<sup>1</sup>In missionary papers and journals this place is called *Touernberg*.

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It is worthy of remark here, that this particular procedure on the part of the Colonial Government, in conjunction with some others, was, at a later date, grossly and deliberately misrepresented in England by less scrupulous members of the London Missionary Society. The British Government placing reliance upon views founded upon distortion of fact and suppression of truth, adopted measures towards the Colony which eventually brought about all the bloodshed and misery of at least the first half of the nineteenth century.

Shortly before the suppression of Toornberg and Hephzibah, a disgraceful traffic in Bushmen children was brought before the notice of Government and was, in consequence, promptly stopped. It appeared that the Bushmen, when compelled to move from one part of the country to another in search of food, were often driven by stress of circumstances to abandon the very young children for which they were unable to provide, and to leave them to the mercy of the climate and wild animals. In many cases these young children had been, purely from motives of humanity, adopted by the European inhabitants, reared and finally made use of as servants or labourers. Sometimes the parents were given food or other presents. The practice soon led to the abuses to which it was liable. From the stage of using undue influence with the parents and even purchasing the children outright, it degenerated to that of worthless and brutal characters actually making raids on Bushmen kraals beyond the frontier for the purpose of capturing the children, taking them into the Colony and selling them. As soon as Mr. Stockenstrom was in possession of well-authenticated cases, he brought the matter before the notice of Government. This was on May 5th, 1817. On August 8th following, Lord Charles Somerset issued a proclamation ordering and declaring that "unless in the case of imminent danger to the life of the child, no inhabitant, without the knowledge of the field-cornet nearest to his residence, shall take, receive, or give any gratuity for a child to its parents, guardians, or others offering to dispose of such child, except in case of some well-grounded apprehension of death to the child, either from famine, irritation of the parents or any

other cause which may induce such inhabitant to believe it necessary for the safety of such child to receive it,—under a penalty of Rds. 200". "That any person encouraging, by purchase or by promise, Bosjesmen or other savages to give up their own children, or procuring children by plunder, depredation or fraud, will be considered guilty of man-stealing and punished accordingly." Regulations were framed, somewhat on the lines of those in connection with the hire of Hottentots, whereby the inhabitants were permitted to employ and bring up Bushmen children. After this the evil practice seems to have come to an end.<sup>1</sup>

The mania, if it may be so termed, which possessed the London Missionary Society to extend its influence to regions beyond civilisation rather than to concern itself with work equally, if not more, necessary nearer home, but less likely to arrest public attention, led to the recommencement of operations in Kaffirland. After Dr. Vanderkemp's failure to establish a mission with Gaika in 1800, nothing was attempted in that direction until 1815. In that year a young Kaffir petty chief, Jan Tzatzoe, who had for some time been resident at Bethelsdorp and had learnt to read and write, applied, presumably at the instigation of Mr. Read, for permission to visit his people at Kaffir Drift and to teach them what he himself knew. Mr. Read, who made the application to Colonel Cuyler, asked to be allowed to accompany Tzatzoe. In transmitting the request to Cape Town on September 1st, 1815, Colonel Cuyler remarked that "it has hitherto been the policy of Government to prevent if possible any intercourse between the Hottentots of the Institute of Bethelsdorp and the Kaffir people; it is doubtful whether the solicited visit of Mr. Read would not again renew the connection which has been with so much

<sup>1</sup> The version of these affairs afterwards published in England was, that in consequence of the missionaries resisting the attempts of the farmers to enslave the Bushmen children, the Government, on no other grounds than the false representations of the farmers, suppressed the missions (Toornberg and Hephzibah). All the available evidence indicates that the missionaries had nothing whatever to do with the matter, but that one of the field-cornets, the upright and honourable Stephanus van Wyk, first approached Mr. Stockenström on the subject, and that he set the Government in action as has been stated (*vide Philip's Researches in South Africa*, vol. ii., chap. xv.; letter from Landdrost of Graaff Reinet to Colonial Secretary, May 5th, 1817, *Records*, vol. x., p. 325, and Lord Charles Somerset's proclamation, August 8th, 1817).

CHAP. labour and study separated. That a proper missionary, a man  
X. of education and known principles, should be sent among the Kaffirs I should strongly recommend, and that accompanied by the young Kaffir mentioned in Mr. Read's letter, the undertaking would have a favourable introduction. But an intercourse to be renewed with the present inhabitants of Bethelsdorp . . . is in my humble opinion not at present advisable." Colonel Cuyler recommended the Rev. Mr. Evans,<sup>1</sup> or "some fit person not so connected as the present missionaries by marriage with the Hottentots". For political reasons it was considered advisable to have some trustworthy person stationed near Gaika. This had appeared all the more evident from the disposition to waver between good and evil which that chief had shown very shortly before in connection with a disturbance among the Boers known as the Slagter's Nek rebellion.<sup>2</sup> Although Mr. Read's original proposal did not meet with approval, yet, in a modified form, it was adopted by permitting a Mr. Williams, another of the London Missionary Society's agents, a well-meaning and zealous man, who had at that time just arrived in the Colony, to recommence a mission in Gaika's country. In order to introduce Mr. Williams to his new surroundings, and to enable him to choose a suitable site for the establishment of his station, Mr. Read was allowed to accompany him into Kaffirland. Besides these two, the expedition consisted of Jan Tzatzoe and five Hottentots with one waggon. Having crossed the Fish River they wandered about on a tour of inspection, during which they visited the kraals of many subordinate chiefs, where, according to the account of the journey afterwards given by Mr. Read, they were hailed "with uncommon joy," and the liveliest enthusiasm shown at the prospect of having missionaries among them. A party of Kaffirs, who followed the missionaries, told Mr. Read, so he afterwards stated, that they were "converted" and had been taught by Makanna not to steal, not to use witchcraft and to have only one wife,—in short, had become most exemplary people. The spot eventually fixed upon for Mr. Williams's headquarters was on the bank of the Kat River, about a mile

<sup>1</sup> Recently arrived in the Colony, shortly afterwards seceded from the London Missionary Society and became the clergyman at Cradock, where he died in 1823.

<sup>2</sup> This will be dealt with fully in the next chapter.

and a half above the present town of Fort Beaufort and about fifteen miles from where Gaika was then living. On the return of the expedition to the Colony, two of the Hottentots gave information to Major Fraser on matters which seem wholly to have escaped the observation of Mr. Read. They stated that at the kraals of Gaika, Kassa, Kratta, Foonah, Habana, Nqeno and Makanna they had seen many stolen cattle and horses. At Kratta's place, they saw two guns which had been taken from two soldiers who had been murdered by Kaffirs shortly before at De Bruin's Drift. At this same place they witnessed an interesting quarrel between David Stuurman (the notorious rebel Hottentot) and Antonie, one of Kratta's headmen. They heard Stuurman say to Antonie: "If I had murdered Mr. Stockenstrom as you have done, and carried his buttons as you do" (alluding to the buttons on Antonie's kaross), "I should be as great a man as you and have it in my power to order silence or otherwise as well as you". Mr. Williams having been officially established, frontier orders were issued on June 11th, 1816, authorising him to communicate with the Colony through the officer commanding at Van Aardt's post and to give passes to Kaffirs who should go to the Colony for provisions or other legitimate purposes.

There is little wonder that the two Hottentots above referred to should have seen such a wholesale distribution of Colonial cattle and horses at the various kraals, for in spite of all the measures which had been adopted, marauders continued to be as busy as ever. The depredation returns for the last quarter of 1815 showed that 676 cattle and fifty-four horses had been driven off and one farmer killed, and by the end of the first quarter of 1816 still more cattle, to the number of 278, had been stolen. About this time too there were unmistakable indications that the Kaffirs were attempting, very cautiously, to encroach again upon the Zuurveld. Many kraals were formed near the banks of the Fish River on their own side. From these they crossed the river, and aided by the thick and tangled bush, almost impenetrable to any except these natives, they sallied forth and pounced upon stock as opportunity offered. One party of Kaffirs managed to get as far west as the Bushman's River and captured ninety-one head of cattle; they were, however, immediately followed by



CHAP. a patrol, when eighty-three were recaptured and two of the  
 X. thieves shot. These attempts again became common along the whole length of the frontier. Gaika's chief interpreter was a Kaffir named Nootka (or Nooka). He frequently visited Grahamstown and other military posts on business from Gaika, perhaps bringing with him a few cattle or horses which had been stolen, but which Gaika had obtained from the thieves and sent back to the Colony as testimony of his good faith towards the Government. It was noticed, however, that after these visits cattle and horses very soon disappeared from the places he had visited or passed through. Suspicion therefore arose that Nootka's, and perhaps also Gaika's, chief object in these expeditions was that of observation. On January 19th, 1816, the two sons of Pieter Brits, a farmer living near the Baviaan's River, were murdered by Kaffirs, and shortly afterwards a Hottentot woman with her baby on her back was wantonly speared to death. The increasing number of these outrages, and the general disquietude so usual in the districts of Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet, combined with a desire to investigate the causes as well as reasons of the antecedent failures in maintaining order, determined Lord Charles Somerset to visit the East. Accordingly, on January 27th, 1817, accompanied by his two daughters, the Colonial Secretary, Colonel Bird, Mr. Thomas Sheridan and the famous Dr. Barry,<sup>1</sup> the governor left Cape Town. This party travelled overland through Swellendam and the Lange Kloof into Uitenhage, and then, in order to carry out the governor's

<sup>1</sup>This individual, known as Dr. James Barry, who was physician to the governor's household, had one of the most extraordinary careers on record. The doctor was a *woman* and throughout a long life of eighty years completely succeeded in concealing her sex and personating a man. Of her parentage and very early life nothing certain is known. At the age of fifteen she managed to obtain the degree of M.D. of Edinburgh University and then entered the army in a medical and surgical capacity. She served in Malta, St. Helena, the West Indies and India, from which country she came to the Cape about the time of Lord Charles Somerset's arrival. She was always at the head of medical affairs while at the Cape, was, in fact, appointed Colonial Medical Inspector, and for a time had complete control of all the medical practitioners, druggists and apothecaries. In 1853 she retired on pension and went to England, where she was appointed Inspector of Hospitals. She was eccentric and very quarrelsome, taking offence at the slightest occasion; she is said to have fought a duel at the Cape. She died in 1865, and not until after her death was it known that Dr. Barry was a woman (for further, *vide* Taylor's *Medical Jurisprudence*, vol. ii., p. 281).

intention of learning something of the disturbed area, they journeyed into Albany and, as near as the impenetrable bush would permit, along the Fish River, from its mouth upwards as far as Kruger's Post. In his report of this journey to Earl Bathurst, dated April 24th, 1817, Lord Charles Somerset describes Albany as a succession of parks from the Bosjesman's River to the Great Fish River, a country well favoured by Nature and well adapted to cultivation and peculiarly fitted for cattle. But "I found that of 145 families which have been established there, ninety had been forced in the last eighteen months to abandon their dwellings, and that it was probable (terror was so general) the remainder would shortly fly". On March 27th, the Somerset Farm was reached. Preparations were already in progress for a ceremonial entry into Kaffirland, whereby it was hoped to overawe Gaika and other chiefs with a sense of the power of the "white" nation. The available military force which was called forth for this duty was under the command of Colonel Cuyler, and consisted of 100 dragoons, detachments of the 83rd, 72nd and Cape Regiments, and a small detachment of artillery with two field-pieces. In addition, 350 armed and mounted burghers were called out from the two districts and were under the command of Mr. Stockenstrom. Mr. Williams was communicated with and instructed to inform Gaika of the intended visit and to assure that chief of the governor's friendly intentions.

The combined forces met at Van Aardt's post on the 29th; on the 30th the cavalcade crossed the Fish River and marched as far as the Kagaberg where a halt for the first night was made. Having proceeded the next day as far as the Kroome River, where they halted for the second night, they journeyed, on April 1st, to the open country along the Kat River, and formed the camp at a spot near the edge of the river, about a mile above the site of the present town of Fort Beaufort and about half-way between that and Mr. Williams's mission station.

Apprehensive that Mr. Williams's influence would not be equal to dispelling Gaika's fears when he beheld the military display that was made on his account, Major Fraser was sent forward in order to give Gaika such explanation and assurances as should tend to quieten any alarm and to make sure of an interview with him. This was not unnecessary, for on arrival

CHAP. at Mr. Williams's place it transpired that Gaika, instigated by  
X. Ndhlabi and other chiefs, had become very reluctant to meet the governor, as a rumour had been spread among them that the object of the visit was to arrest him in connection with the murder of Mr. Stockenstrom in 1811. Major Fraser succeeded in dispelling these fears, and, telling Gaika he might bring as many followers as he liked, that chief consented to present himself at the proper time. The major returned and met the governor before he reached the Kat River. On the evening of that day a deputation of four Kaffirs arrived at the governor's camp to say that Gaika would come whenever it should be convenient to receive him. The next morning they returned with a message to the effect that Gaika had altered his mind, and by the advice of other chiefs had decided not to meet the governor. This necessitated another visit by Major Fraser, which resulted in Gaika, in great distress and dread, approaching the British camp. The troops and burghers were drawn up and formed three sides of a square, with the two small cannons placed on the right and left. In the centre was the governor's marquee, with the sides removed in order that the conference should be as public as possible. "About 11 o'clock in the forenoon of the 2nd of April, Gaika with a numerous escort and several other chiefs came to the opposite bank of the Kat River to that on which the British force was stationed. . . . A second hesitation took place, however; when the Caffer chief arrived on the left of the Kat River, many of his people were alarmed at the troops, and actually left their chiefs to fly to the hills. A guard of about 300, however, well armed with assegais, formed a square about him, and it was necessary to renew the assurances of his safety before he would be persuaded to cross the river. The Landdrosts therefore of the frontier districts (both known to the chief) and Major Fraser went to him and decided him; they crossed the river together, and walked arm in arm with the chiefs Gaika and Ndhlabi to the Governor's marquee; several other chiefs followed. The Caffer guard had opened into line and now brought up the rear."<sup>1</sup> Mats had been spread for the reception of the chiefs. On the right of His Excellency Gaika was placed, and next

<sup>1</sup> Minutes of the Conference, *Records*, vol. xi., p. 311.

to him Ndhlabi was seated, then Botman, Nqeno, Maqomo (Gaika's eldest son), Jalousa and others formed a semicircle in front of the governor. Habana, one of the worst of the robbers, was conspicuously absent. The conference which then followed was carried on by means of two interpreters, one to translate from English to Dutch, which was done by Mr. Stockenstrom, and one to translate from Dutch to Kaffir. The governor began the conversation by saying that he had come to renew the friendship which formerly existed between the Colonists and Kaffir nation; a statement which, considering the history of the relations of the two races ever since they had been in contact, was somewhat ambiguous. He then spoke of the numerous depredations and the injury the Colony suffered thereby and asked Gaika to use his influence to prevent them. To this Gaika replied that the stealing went on without his knowledge or consent and that he did all in his power to prevent it, but he had not the power to control the other chiefs; he certainly had, he continued, the name of the first chief, but many, even of those present, considered themselves independent of him and did not acknowledge his authority. He was then told that the governors of the Colony had always regarded him as the first chief and had never treated with any others and that it was the intention to continue to act thus. Gaika was pleased to hear this and regretted there were not more present to hear it also. He promised to do all he could to stop the thefts on the part of his people, even to putting to death any whom he found guilty; he further promised to collect stolen cattle and horses and to send them back to the Colony. His Excellency then proposed a measure, the policy of which afterwards gave rise to the bitterest controversy amongst those who professed to have the best interests of both Colonists and Kaffirs at heart. As every other means of putting an end to stock-lifting had failed, and as no Kaffir seemed willing to act against another in the interest of a white man, the idea of "collective responsibility" arose. By this means it was hoped to compel the Kaffirs to assist in the recovery of stolen property. The proposal was that when animals stolen from the Colony were traced or "spoored" to a kraal, that that kraal should be visited and the animals retaken; in the event of the animals not being there, which was likely to be

CHAP. X. the case, the owner of that kraal was then to be held responsible for tracking the "spoor" farther, or to have his own cattle taken in such quantity as would compensate the injured party for his loss, and the owner of the kraal was to obtain redress from the real thieves through their chief. This was afterwards known as the "Reprisal System". Gaika agreed to this, though it is uncertain how far he approved of it; for in the awe-inspiring circumstances in which he was then placed he would probably have consented to anything. The governor consulted Gaika as to whether his people would like to be allowed to visit Grahamstown for the purpose of bartering ivory, skins, and other produce of their country in return for such articles as they had occasion for. It was proposed that a fair should be held twice in each year and that Kaffirs should be allowed to attend and remain two days. They were to have passes from Gaika, who would have to be responsible, not only for their orderly behaviour while at the fair but also for their not swerving from the direct road on the way there and back. For himself Gaika assented, but he could not answer for other chiefs. In the end, however, nothing came of this. After Gaika had been exhorted to listen to and to act upon the good instruction he received from the missionary, Mr. Williams, who was present throughout the interview, the conference came to an end. "His Excellency then presented to Gaika a sack of presents and a beautiful grey horse. The contents of the sack were shoes, handkerchiefs, shawls, buttons, knives and tinder-boxes. The conduct of Gaika was remarkable while receiving the presents. So greedy was he, that he could not wait a moment to examine separately what was presented to him, although Colonel Cuyler was at the pains of opening each parcel for that purpose; the articles were no sooner put in his hand than they were laid on the ground, and his hand stretched out for more. When he had done receiving, he fled instantly, like a thief, to the other side of the river, where he halted for a little time, and then returned to the place whence he came in the morning. Not being content with all that he had received, he sent next morning to ask me for a knife, tinder-boxes, looking-glasses, handkerchiefs and food. He had either heard or supposed that I had received something and therefore

thought that he must have a share."<sup>1</sup> It was originally intended to invite the assembled chiefs to dine with the governor in his marquee and to fire off the cannons for their amusement, but their anxiety to get to a distance from the scene of their late ordeal frustrated these hospitable designs. Leaving Kaffirland, Lord Charles Somerset returned to Somerset, thence to Graaff Reinet, where he remained a few days, and then finally through the Karoo back to Cape Town, where he arrived on April 21st.

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The harassed life which had been the continual lot of the unfortunate Eastern inhabitants, and the complete failure of the measures which had hitherto been pursued for creating lasting peace were too deeply impressed upon their minds to allow them to expect much good to be derived from this visit. The steps, perhaps obvious, which immediately followed it were the same as those adopted by Sir John Cradock after his visit, namely, the repeopling of the abandoned places and efforts to prevent the Kaffirs from seizing Colonial cattle. Their own experience of their relentless and enterprising neighbours did not lead them to place much reliance upon the governor's statement "that the surest way of repressing depredations will not so much depend upon the military force stationed upon the frontier, as upon the exertions and confidence of the Inhabitants themselves, which they will best evince by reoccupying as speedily as possible their deserted habitations in the vicinity of the Fish River". He considered the best way of treating the Kaffirs was not to enter their country with hostile intentions, but to hold out lasting advantages of a more friendly intercourse. Had he had longer experience in Eastern affairs, he might possibly have discovered that severe chastisement, which they plainly saw it was feared to give them, was the only treatment to which they were amenable. To prevail upon individuals to re-occupy the country eastwards of the Bushman's River, the landdrost was authorised, without direct reference to Government, to grant places free of all expense of measurement and title-deeds, and to remit the rents for the first ten years. The new system of frontier defence which Lord Charles Somerset proposed was the most

<sup>1</sup> Account of the interview by Mr. Williams, *vide* Philip's *Researches*, vol. ii., p. 175.

IAP. efficient which had, up to that time, been proposed. It differed  
K. from the former one, however, only in its completeness. The principle was recognised, that though it was impossible, even with large numbers of troops, to prevent Kaffirs from gaining access to the Colony, yet by forming a cordon of posts within easy reach of one another, and in a country peculiarly adapted to the speedy conveyance of intelligence by signals, both by day and night, it was possible to prevent thieves from returning into Kaffirland with booty. Thus, though cattle and horses might be stolen, they would very soon be retaken. The first line of defence, which consisted of eleven posts, was on the banks of the Fish River itself, except in those parts of the country where the dense bush extended some miles from the river. On the lower reaches of the river, the banks were either thickly covered with bush and tangled undergrowth or themselves so precipitous as to defy any attempts to get cattle across, while on the upper reaches, passing through more open country, they would be better under the observation of the patrols.

Ascending the Great Fish River from its mouth, the first post was at Lower Kaffir Drift, about eight miles from the sea. Below that the river itself, on account of its width and the deep soft mud at low tide, was a sufficient barrier. Four miles farther up, though, on account of the bush, a two hours' ride, was Upper Kaffir Drift. The river here passes along a deep and beautiful valley, thickly wooded to the water's edge. The post was situated on the open ground at the top of the hill on the Colonial side. A good command was thus obtained of a long stretch of river in each direction, as well as the approaches to the opposite bank. A few miles above Upper Kaffir Drift, the Fish River commences a very tortuous course and bends somewhat suddenly to the west. In the rough angle thus formed there is a wide expanse of very hilly, wild and bushy country. To attempt any defensive operations in such a region with the force then available was out of the question. A detour was therefore made and this part of the country cut off by a line drawn directly westerly from Upper Kaffir Drift to Waai Plaats and thence to Hermanus Kraal (afterwards Fort Brown) where the river was again met. The distance from Upper Kaffir Drift to Waai Plaats Post was one hour, and







*Photo R B Blakiston, B A.*

**RUINS OF KAFFIR DRIFT FORT.**



*Photo . R B Blakiston, B A.*

**RUINS OF KAFFIR DRIFT FORT.**  
**(Another view.)**

from there to Hermanus Kraal, six hours. The other posts along the river were Koetzer's Drift, one and a half hours from Hermanus Kraal, then De Bruin's Drift, one and a half hours farther, Wentzel Coetzee's, now Carlisle Bridge, one hour and a half from De Bruin's Drift. A post known as Junction Drift was situated near where the Little Fish River joins the Great Fish River, two and a half hours from Wentzel Coetzee's, and then posts were placed at the farms of Van der Merwe, De Lange and Paul Bester—about an hour's ride apart. The next post to Bester's was Van Aardt's (now Longhope Siding), and one hour beyond that was Roode Waal. Three-quarters of an hour's ride thence lay the last post, that of Kruger's, near Slagter's Nek, and not quite so far up the Fish River as where the Bavarian's River joins it. That line of posts was practically the eastern boundary of the Colony.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The general type of these military posts, as judged by an examination of the scanty ruins which remain at the present day, was that of a square space contained by stone loopholed walls. The stone, which was undoubtedly obtained in the vicinity, was rough hewn and built together with mud mortar or "dagga," and the work probably was done by the soldiers themselves. Along the inside of the walls, small rooms, practically shelter accommodation for the men and stabling for the horses, were built. The open space left in the centre, which might be fifty or eighty paces across, served for mustering and parading the men. At Upper Kaffir Drift and Van Aardt's posts, the above simple type was considerably exceeded. Of the former there is a good deal left at the present day, though all is in the last stages of dilapidation and decay. Examination of these ruins indicates that there was an outer stone wall beyond the walls of the enclosed buildings, thus forming a passage round the fort. At the corners of the outer walls were bastions on which field-pieces could be, and probably were, mounted. These commanded the approaches to the banks on the far side of the river, though the river itself is not visible from the fort. The accommodation for the men and horses was fairly extensive. Outside the fort were several isolated buildings, one of which was evidently a bake-house. Upper Kaffir Drift was always an important pass into Kaffirland. At De Bruin's Drift nothing is left to-day but the foundations, which may, however, be easily traced. Two establishments seem to have existed, one, probably the post proper of the usual type, was situated about twenty yards from the river and about a mile and a half from De Bruin's Drift itself in the direction of Wentzel Coetzee's, now Carlisle Bridge. The second, very much smaller than the first, was on top of an isolated conical hill, and overlooking the drift. Van Aardt's post was on a larger scale than De Bruin's and seems to have been a kind of headquarters establishment. Some of the remains of the walls may yet be seen. It was situated near the site of the present Longhope Siding on the Cradock line, and on a farm then called Verkeerde Water. A captain was usually in command there, who had some control over the other posts. There is a graveyard with a large number of soldiers' graves near the ruins. All the buildings of these posts have fared badly at the hands of the farmers, who, acquiring

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The second line of posts was more within the Colony. The following were the stations: Prinsloo's (near the present Cookhouse), Somerset Farm, Grahamstown, Rietberg Hill, between Rietberg and Coerney, Coerney, Sandflats, Rautenbach's Drift on the Bushman's River, Vermaak's Farm, Meyer's Farm, Addo Drift on the Sunday's River, and, the most western, the farm of Jacobus Oosthuisen. The total number of men at all these posts was 1,104 (*i.e.* forty-two captains and subalterns and 1,062 rank and file). Each post had a number of the 21st Light Dragoons for the purposes of speedy communication between the different places, and also some of the Hottentot Corps, for following up stolen cattle. Patrols went out daily, morning and evening, and any trace or spoor of cattle was followed up to the first kraal of Kaffirs and compensation demanded according to the agreement with Gaika. To discourage all violence towards the Kaffirs a reward of Rds. 5 was offered for every prisoner taken to Uitenhage.

As if the Kaffirs intended to show that, with all these elaborate precautions, it was impossible to prevent them from entering the Colony and returning with spoil, a marauding party, within a week of the governor's return to Cape Town, crossed the boundary and succeeded, in spite of the vigilance and signals of the first line of defence, in driving nineteen head of cattle over the Fish River into their own country. As soon as the loss was reported, Lieutenant Vereker of the 83rd Regiment with 100 men went in pursuit. The spoor was easily traced to the kraals of Habana, the nephew of Ndhambi. This was the first occasion for acting in accordance with the system of reprisal agreed to by Gaika. Lieutenant Vereker, having seized nineteen head from that kraal, demanded the restitution of those stolen, and gave the people until the following morning to comply with the order. Having waited all night, they discovered, at daybreak, the hills around them peopled by large numbers of Kaffirs in hostile array, and received a peremptory refusal of satisfaction. A retreat was therefore commenced with those which had been taken from the kraal. "The party was watched and followed by the Caffres, but not molested until they got to the bed of the Little Kat

the lands on which they were placed, have pulled them down and in some cases used the stones for building their homesteads.

River, when presuming that narrow pass to be favourable to their object, they rushed with great impetuosity upon Lieut. Vereker's detachment, 'making horrible shouts and casting their assegais at our people, by which three men were wounded'. Lieut. Vereker drew up his party and commenced firing upon the Caffres. Five were immediately killed and many others wounded, the remainder fled in every direction. Lieut. Vereker returned to Grahamstown with the nineteen head of cattle, and restored them to the persons who had been plundered."<sup>1</sup> Had this system of defence been allowed to remain, and had the various officers and men become, by experience and intimate knowledge of every part of the district allotted to them, completely adapted to their duties, there can be no doubt but that Kaffir inroads would have very greatly if not entirely ceased. Circumstances, however, conspired against the East. The financial condition of England at this time necessitated the most rigid economy in connection with the distant Colonies. Further, Lord Charles Somerset's administration had already been the subject of adverse comment in England. Political opponents had drawn invidious comparisons between the expenditure at the Cape under the Batavian with that under Lord Charles Somerset's government. The *Morning Chronicle* of December 19th, 1816, had severely criticised him, in what he called "a most scurrilous and at the same time contemptible and ignorant attack" in relation to the expense he was incurring for the improvement of the breed of horses and sheep.

The attention which was thus drawn to the affairs of the Cape resulted in the determination to reduce to a minimum the garrison stationed there. In view of the necessities of the East, this was most disastrous and in the end proved the reverse of economical. Almost before the military stations along the Fish River were properly established, orders were received (June, 1817) for the withdrawal of the 21st Light Dragoons and their transportation to India. In this same month also the Cape Regiment was to have been disbanded, but this was postponed until September 24th, when, in its place a new Colonial corps—the Cape Corps—was formed. It

<sup>1</sup> Letter from Lord Charles Somerset to Earl Bathurst, June 23rd, 1817. *Records*, vol. xi., p. 357.

CHAP. consisted of one major (in the first instance Major Fraser, who  
X. was in command), one captain and five subordinate officers. The rank and file was composed of Europeans and Hottentots, seventy-eight of whom formed a cavalry section while the remaining 169 were infantry. This regiment, if it may be so called, replaced the 800 men of the old Cape Regiment of Sir John Cradock's time. By this reduction a permanent saving of Rds. 250,000 was effected—a very material diminution in the amount of payments made in England on account of the Colony. In September the Cape garrison was further depleted by the withdrawal of the 83rd Regiment, which went to Ceylon, and also most of the artillery. The total number of troops in the Colony on June 25th, 1817, was 4,341; by October 25th this number was reduced to 2,744, and included some almost useless reinforcements which arrived about the time the others left.

Whether Cape Colony was regarded in those days, as it was at a later date (*viz.* 1849), as a distant region useful to the home country in assisting to rid itself of its ne'er-do-wells and undesirables is not clear, but certain it was that the characters of the men who composed these new reinforcements were the worst possible. A large number of them were restless foreigners, captured deserters, with no particular attachment to the British, or, perhaps, any other, Government. The remainder were British, but mostly deserters and some of them criminals of the worst type. As a body they were, for some time at least, not only useless on account of the fear there was to trust them but so dangerous as to necessitate their control by other troops. About 400 constituted what was known as the Royal African Corps, while the others were drafted into the 1st Battalion of the 60th Regiment. On June 20th, the first batch of 161 deserters arrived in Simon's Bay in the transport *Lloyds*. Some indication, even then, was given of the character of the new-comers, for before arrangements were completed for landing them a detachment of the 48th Regiment had to go on board to guard them, as they had formed a plot to seize the vessel and get away in her. The Royal African Corps was sent to the eastern frontier and distributed among the Fish River posts. Scattered as they thus necessarily were, and not being directly under the eye of sufficiently powerful authority,

they were able to follow the dictates of their evil inclinations. The result was that desertions from each of the posts became frequent. Some even made their way with their arms and ammunition into Kaffirland, while others caused consternation in the Colony. Before long the prison accommodation was taxed to the utmost, and though general as well as regimental courts martial were held, matters did not improve.

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In October, three privates, Michael Ryan, Henry John and James Gilbert, stationed at De Bruin's Drift post, were sent to escort James Connor and William Ryley, prisoners, to Grahamstown. On the road the two prisoners attacked the escort, disabling and disarming Gilbert and John and compelling Ryan to join them. These three then travelled towards Algoa Bay through Assegai Bush and Rautenbach's Drift on the Bushman's River. Having refreshed themselves with a sheep which they stole from a farm in that vicinity, they proceeded to near Cradock Place, where they rested some time in the bush. Continuing their journey they overtook a waggon in the dusk of evening, which they stopped and plundered. Shortly afterwards they met some Hottentots to whom some of the articles were sold, and with the money thus obtained they repaired to a canteen situated on the road leading from Algoa Bay to Zwartkops River. Here, after having paid for some drink and demanded more without pay, Connor took a gun, fired at the canteen keeper and killed him. The place was then ransacked and money and other property, even some of the clothing on the body of the murdered man, taken. The news of these doings brought a party of farmers and Hottentots in pursuit of the vagabonds. After looting the canteen, Connor and his comrades returned to the bush where they had slept the night before, and while he was counting and tying up in parcels the money he had obtained, the party came in sight. Rylcy was shot dead upon the spot. Ryan, who endeavoured to run away, and Connor, taken somewhat unawares, were both arrested and conveyed to the tronk at Uitenhage. About this time also a party of the Royal African Corps had been stationed on guard over some barrels of spirit which had been landed at Algoa Bay, but which had to remain on the beach until waggons could be procured to convey them to the commissariat stores. These men attacked the

CHAP. sergeant who was in command of them and plundered the  
X. casks to the extent of 157 gallons of rum. In writing on these matters to Earl Bathurst, Lord Charles Somerset said that sending this class of man to the frontier "has not only upset all the measures which I have adopted for the pacification of that disturbed quarter, but has caused such terror in the interior that, so far from being able to induce settlers to repair to these fertile districts, even those who remained are taking measures for abandoning a country where their lives and property are in imminent danger, not only from their old enemies, the Kaffirs, but more so from those who have been placed there for their protection".

Of all the exploits of these enterprising defenders of our shores and frontier, perhaps the most daring was the successful seizure of a trading vessel, the *Elizabeth*, which was lying off Robben Island and taking in a cargo of oil. Some of the 60th Regiment who were stationed on that island as a guard to the convicts released the prisoners in their charge, and associating some of them with themselves, put off in a small boat on the night of November 10th, and boarded the *Elizabeth*. About midnight, the captain, who was below in his cabin, heard a noise on deck, and attempted to ascend in order to see what was happening. He was fired at and prevented from coming on deck and then discovered, from the shouts of the men, that his ship was taken. The cabin door was closed upon him and two sentries placed over it until morning. A convict named Coogan, who had formerly served in the navy, then assumed command and gave orders for the cable to be cut and the sails to be set. The captain and crew accepted the long-boat which was offered to them for the purpose of making the land. He was compelled to give up his watch, keys and his papers, and having been provided with a bucket of water and a few pounds of bread they pushed off for the Cape Town shore. As the boat left the ship, five of the soldiers pulled off their regimentals and threw them into the sea. The ship appeared to be worked in a seamanlike manner and by eleven o'clock in the morning was being steered to the north-west.

Simon's Town was kept in a continued state of alarm on account of the 60th Regiment. Colonel Graham, who was commandant, found it almost impossible to do anything,

although he tried to keep the men in barracks at night and had their conduct watched during the day. But "not a day passed without some crime being committed and generally under circumstances which left no doubt of hardened and practised villains being the offenders". Part of the 72nd Regiment were employed in protecting the place against the 60th. Lord Charles Somerset made the very strongest representations to Earl Bathurst and H.R.H. the Commander of the Forces. He urged "such measures being speedily adopted as shall tend to tranquillise the minds of His Majesty's subjects, by removing from hence this dangerous class of force". "The employment of this description of soldier in the Colony, and the enormities they have committed have caused more discontent than any act the British Government could commit towards the Colony." This appeal was answered in April, 1818, when the 60th Regiment was removed and its place taken by about 750 rank and file of the 38th. The Royal African Corps remained in the Colony and after a time sobered down and rendered good service, in particular at the defence of Grahamstown in the famous battle of 1819. In a few years the corps was disbanded. The removal of the cavalry from the East and the conduct of the Royal African Corps produced the result which might be expected under such circumstances. Depredations became still more daring and extensive, and murders of the inhabitants more common. In September, the farm of Pieter Retief, the famous Voortrekker who was murdered by the Zulu chief Dingaan in 1838, was specially selected for persecution. As a preliminary, thirty-four head of cattle were taken and a Hottentot herd stabbed to death with assegais. Shortly after this, he was again visited, when sixteen more cattle, together with a large number from other farmers, were stolen, and finally the remainder of his stock was driven off and his house and kraals burnt to the ground. On October 26th, the farmer Scheepers, in the same manner, lost twenty-three cattle and seven horses. In reporting this he said, "we are again plunged into the greatest misery, we have no rest either night or day on account of the Kaffirs". About this time, also, two of the Hottentot Corps were barbarously murdered at Upper Kaffir Drift. To increase the general alarm there was at this time a wily and dexterous Hottentot named Arnoldus Tidor, who



CHAP. X. was making a reputation for himself in the Colony by endeavouring apparently to emulate the enterprise of his compatriot David Stuurman. Since 1812 he had been leading a vagabond and predatory life, and attempting to persuade other Hottentots to join him. Although many attempts to capture him had been made, he was up to this date still at large, and was probably assisting the Kaffirs as a spy. A reward was offered for his apprehension dead or alive, but he does not seem to have been captured.

It is almost impossible in these present days of good and efficient government to realise the conditions of life in the East, more especially in the districts of Uitenhage and Albany, at those times. It is not astonishing that after so many years of half-hearted and feeble defence on the part of the Government and, as will be shown later, so many years of official sympathy with the Kaffirs as an innocent and grievously injured race and antipathy to the Colonists as wanton aggressors, that the Boers should at length have abandoned the country and sought for themselves some other region where, if life was no easier, it could be no harder. Gaika appeared to be acting up to the promises he had made to the governor at the Kat River. In May, he sent Nootka to Grahamstown with fifty-three horses, and, as Colonial cattle were accumulating in Kaffirland, he invited farmers to visit his country for the purpose of picking out and regaining what had been taken from them. All this, however, may not have meant much, for at this time he was on better terms with Ndhlabi, who made no pretence of wishing to conciliate the Government or Colonists. Further, Gaika's anxiety to assist the Colony was usually associated with expectations or demands of presents, which were not far short in value of the stolen property he professed to recover. For instance, on August 2nd, the following modest request was sent to Major Fraser through Mr. Williams :—

“ KAT RIVER.

“ By request of Gaika I write for the following articles for him as a present. From His Excellency the Governor, a gun; from Colonel Cuyler, one horse, and two from yourself, and between Colonel Cuyler and yourself, sheep and goats, a suit of clothes, a great-coat, shoes, hat, knives,

tinder-boxes, beads, very fine (that is, small), brass plates and wire, an axe and iron, tiger skins, buttons such as you wear, corn for seed and garden seed and dogs, and money that he may purchase such things as he wants from the Boers. CHAP.  
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“(Signed) J. WILLIAMS, Missionary.”

In answer to this Lord Charles Somerset sent him a horse, fifty sheep and fifty goats, together with brass wire and plates. He also sent twelve ornamental gorgets, one of which was to be worn by every Kaffir as a token or pass when going into the Colony. Conformable to the agreement at the Kat River, no Kaffir was to cross the Fish River without such a pass, and Gaika was held responsible for the good conduct of the wearer.

Advantage was taken of Gaika's invitation to search his country for stolen cattle. Commandants Nel and Muller, accompanied by sixteen burghers, set out for this purpose in November. They were well received by the chief, who, apparently, gave them every facility for accomplishing their object. Ndhlabi, on the other hand, peremptorily refused to allow any such procedure among his people. He disapproved of Gaika's action in this matter and determined to resist Nel and his party. Although nine Colonial horses were recognised in his own kraal, he told the commandant that he should have neither horses nor cattle, and added, though the connection is not clear, that the Kaffirs were a nation as well as the English. Having visited a number of petty chiefs, the party returned to the Colony with eighty-three cattle and one horse. The general attitude of Ndhlabi and the influence he was exercising over the Kaffirs in consequence of the unpopularity which Gaika had incurred by his attachment, professed or sincere, to the Colony, could not be regarded without concern. Gaika's people were forsaking him and going over to Ndhlabi, whose policy was more to their liking. The large quantity of stolen stock which the burghers had seen with the people who professed allegiance to Ndhlabi, and the defiance which had been shown both by the chief himself and his people, were considered by the governor as calling for some immediate and drastic measures. The course which seemed most expedient was to seize Ndhlabi and, providing him with every comfort, to

CHAP. X. keep him a prisoner in the Colony until Gaika should regain his lost influence and be able to restrain the marauding dispositions of his followers. Considering the imperfect defence of the frontier, the experiment might have proved most dangerous.<sup>1</sup>

As soon as the governor heard of the result of Commandant Nel's expedition, he issued to Major Fraser (December 5th, 1817) instructions to collect a force, or commando, for the purpose of visiting Ndhlabi and demanding the Colonial property in his possession, or, in the event of refusal, enforcing the Kat River agreement by seizing Kaffir cattle equivalent to the number of Colonial cattle seen in the kraals. The greatest forbearance was enjoined, should it have been necessary to proceed to extremities; special care was to be taken that the steps it might be expedient to resort to should not be mingled with any feeling of retaliation on account of the cruelties which had been committed by the Kaffirs; their kraals and cultivated grounds were not to be destroyed, but all humanity practicable was to be used towards them. "In case of resistance you will use every endeavour to secure the person of Ndhlabi and bring him prisoner into the Colony, but no undue severity shall be used towards him, on the contrary, every comfort and convenience and every mark of kind treatment consistent with the perfect security of his person shall be afforded him." In this case, as in all others when it was found necessary to visit Kaffirland for the punishment of some refractory chief, Gaika was first communicated with and assurances of friendship accompanied by presents were sent to him. He was informed that the hostile force about to cross the boundary was solely to enforce a compliance on the part of Ndhlabi with the public treaty at the Kat River, and that he and his people would not be interfered with. But little faith,

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Somerset, the commandant of the frontier, writing to Colonel Wade on April 8th, 1830, on the general relations existing between the Kaffir chiefs, their people and the Colonists, said: "The Caffres generally are perfectly indifferent as to the terms they may be on with the Colony, although the Chiefs themselves are fully sensible of the great advantage they derive by the intimate footing they are now upon with us. They have, however, but little influence with the people, or if they have any, they know that their interference in checking depredations materially deprives them of their popularity and influence, as the moment a chief is severe with his people on account of depredations on the Colonists, his Caffres immediately join a chief of more liberal principles."

however, was placed in him; it was thought not improbable that he might seize the opportunity, apparently afforded by the absence of Major Fraser and his force, to make an irruption into what he deemed an unprotected country. A party of burghers, therefore, under Mr. Stockenstrom, was stationed at the Baviaan's River. This step was by no means unnecessary, for Gaika had no greater trust in the friendly professions of the authorities, and had, after receiving the official communication respecting the intended commando, actually assembled many of his people for the purpose of "hunting". Some Hottentots arrived from Kaffirland at Van Aardt's post on January 5th, 1818, and others again on the following day at the next post, Roode Waal. From them it was learnt that Gaika was out with 400 of his people, and that he was determined, when the commando entered Kaffirland, to cross the boundary and to kill and destroy everything that came in his way. On the 6th of January also, nine Kaffir women were found lurking round Roode Waal post and were believed to be spies. They were arrested and kept prisoners until the commando had started. They stated that Gaika was with a large number of his people, within six hours of the post, on a hunting expedition. On January 8th, 1818, the commando, consisting of mounted and armed burghers and also some of the Cape Corps, left Grahamstown. The march was directed over the flats to the east of the town, to Trompetter's Drift, where the Fish River was crossed, as Ndhambi was then living near the coast in the present district of Peddie. He had been warned of this movement against him and had prepared himself accordingly. Hence when the party arrived at his kraal, not a single head of cattle was to be found, and although the wily chief himself was there, he had no occasion to offer any resistance and therefore Major Fraser did not feel warranted in seizing him. The commando then moved northwards to the country between the Keiskamma and the Kat Rivers, and on January 17th came upon the kraals of a number of petty chiefs, namely, Habana, Kratta, Botman, Kassa, Nqeno, Pangella, Dyta, Coetzie, Bolanie, Kubash and others. In possession of these people they found hundreds of the Colonial cattle they were in quest of. The force was divided into four divisions and a wholesale collection of the beasts commenced. Some were in

CHAP. the kraals and some were grazing on the distant veldt. The  
X. total number obtained was 2,060, which were safely driven into the Colony. Of these 603 were recognised and reclaimed by their owners, while the remaining 1,457 were distributed as part compensation to other losers.

On his return to Grahamstown on February 8th, Major Fraser received a letter from Mr. Williams, written at the request of Gaika. That chief complained that faith had been broken with him in that he had been told that the hostile movement was intended against Ndhambi, and yet it was his people who had been attacked. "Why is my place destroyed?" (referring to the dispersion of the people). "Why have my people been shot? and why are my children left without food?" he asked. He claimed that the petty chiefs from whom the cattle had been taken were subject to him and not to Ndhambi and demanded restitution. This raised a most difficult question and one to which it was almost always impossible to give an answer, namely, to which of the great chiefs did any particular minor chief acknowledge allegiance. As has already been stated, these minor chiefs and people allied themselves first to one chief and then to another as best suited their convenience and liking. But in the cases of the greater number of those referred to, there can be little doubt but that they were followers of Ndhambi and that the action of Gaika was merely a ruse to get back the cattle. The matter came before the governor who instituted an investigation. Habana, Kratta, and Kassa were undoubtedly Ndhambi's people, for they were the foremost in fighting for him in 1811, the last two in particular were concerned in the murder of the elder Stockenstrom. Further, when cattle had been traced to the kraals of nearly every one of them and Gaika had been applied to, his answer invariably was, "They are not my people, go to Ndhambi". But whatever the political relations of these people were at that time, Gaika's friendship with the Colony had to be maintained. At the end of February a further consignment of the usual presents was sent to him, and an assurance that some of the cattle would be restored. Towards the end of the year, namely, in October, 122 head of cattle were bought and paid for out of the funds of the district chests of Uitenhage and Graaff Reinet for this purpose. So far this was

an admission that cattle had been wrongfully taken from Gaika. Under the peculiar circumstances it is difficult to see how Major Fraser could have acted otherwise than he did. Even supposing all the people were followers of Gaika, then the possession of 603 Colonial cattle would seem sufficient justification for the procedure. Yet, the small section of negrophiles, whose "philanthropic" sentiments uttered in Exeter Hall overwhelmed more sober and truthful statements, found opportunities of referring to this as "Fraser's blundering commando of 1818" and of representing the whole movement as the Government using the commando as a means of gratifying cupidity and vengeance. Necessary as some hostile demonstration was in Kaffirland, the visit of this commando made matters far worse than they were before. To the greed for the farmers' cattle was now added a thirst for vengeance, and a determination to proceed to the last resort of bloodshed. According to the evidence of some Hottentots, as soon as the force left Kaffirland, Kassa, Botman and others held a meeting of their people and decided to attack the Colony, to murder all the male inhabitants, retake the cattle which they had lost as well as all other which came in their way, and to get possession of guns and ammunition; then, being well armed, to retire to their own country and wait to see what the Government would do. The plan was submitted to Gaika. He advised them to postpone action until it was known what steps would be taken by the Colony with respect to the cattle which Major Fraser had taken, and then, in the event of satisfaction not being obtained, he would permit the execution of the plan. Without waiting for this formality, however, the work of destruction and carnage proceeded. On January 15th, a soldier was murdered at Upper Kaffir Drift, and on the 27th three brothers, the sons of a Boer named D. Geere, and a slave woman, living near Baviaan's River, were killed and forty cattle taken. On March 3rd, three slaves who were tending forty-two oxen were speared to death—one of them having no less than nineteen assegai wounds—and the cattle, of course, taken. On the 5th, two soldiers and one Hottentot were murdered and seventy head of cattle captured. In spite of these almost daily outrages and the appeals for help by the inhabitants nothing was, or could be, done. The

CHAP. following is a letter sent to Major Fraser by the two haem-  
 X. raaden, Barend de Klerck and F. J. van Aardt, under these  
 circumstances :—

“GRAHAMSTOWN,  
 “March 28th, 1818.

“SIR,

“The daily anxiety that we experience from the apprehension of being attacked by the Kaffirs, obliges me, as well as also partly my duty, to request you respectfully that we may obtain protection for our Houses, Families and Property, for alone we are unable to defend one another, should it prove true what the slave Africa has declared (referring to the action of the minor chiefs), that the Kaffirs are strongly resolved to destroy all, should they not get their cattle restored to them. And whereas this part of the Frontier is thinly inhabited, we most earnestly pray you to send us some Burghers, from other parts not so much exposed to danger, for some time to assist in our protection. Surely the Government gives us as much military assistance as possible, but you are well aware that when cattle are stolen from different places, they are all wanted to follow the tracks into Kaffirland, and that during their absence we have hardly any protection left on this side of the boundary, and as before observed we cannot assist one another. Convinced that you will contribute all in your power for the good of the Inhabitants, We have, etc.,

“B. J. DE KLERCK.

“F. J. VAN AARDT.

“To G. S. Fraser, Esq., Deputy Landdrost.”

All these things happening at the beginning of 1818 were, so to speak, the shadows of still greater events which characterised the end of that year and the beginning of the next. The life of the Eastern Boer, however, was little else but shadows, while the simple and unconventional life of the frontier Kaffir was a happy and profitable one. The further unfolding of this part of our history must be postponed until an incident has been dealt with, which for the sake of clearness has been omitted from its chronological position and treated in a chapter by itself, namely, the so-called Slagter's Nek rebellion.

## CHAPTER XI.

### SLAGTER'S NEK.

THE term rebellion is usually held to connote a rising of an organised section of a community, prompted by a firm belief in the righteousness of its own cause and encouraged by the expectation of success, to substitute, by violence if need be, another form of government for that which *de facto* commands its allegiance. Such were the rebellions of "the Fifteen" and "the Forty-five"; and such also was the Irish rebellion of 1798. The name is also given to insurrections which lack one or more of these characteristics, provided that their magnitude or subsequent importance is such as to warrant the use of a stronger term than "insurrection" or "riot". Thus the action of the Hottentots of the Cape Corps and of the missionary institutions of the Kat River and Theopolis in 1851 has not without reason been termed a rebellion, although the psychological features which characterise a true rebellion are not certainly to be observed.

CHAP.  
XI.

The Slagter's Nek affair presents all the characteristics enumerated above on a small scale, but only in its latter stage; for the drama to be related in this chapter falls naturally into two acts. The first concerns the actions and misfortunes of F. C. Bezuidenhout, which, interesting and important as they are on account of their issue, are free from the element of rebellion; while the second is the work of his brother Johannes Bezuidenhout and, though insignificant in fact, presents all the characteristics of a true rebellion. The importance which this incident has assumed in South African history should not mislead us in the attempt to narrate faithfully the actual occurrences. These can be gathered from the official report of the trials,<sup>1</sup> while the adventitious significance which the matter has acquired can be explained from the

<sup>1</sup> See the *Rebellion of 1815 Generally Known as Slagter's Nek*, edited by H. C. V. Leibbrandt, Cape Town, 1902.



CHAP. circumstances of the written and oral traditions. Both tasks  
 XI. are to be undertaken in the present chapter, for such deep-rooted tradition cannot be lightly set aside; and the correct interpretation of the events here to be recorded depends scarcely less upon the distinction of the two acts in the drama than upon the careful discrimination of historical fact from popular tradition. The nature of the tradition is twofold. To the Afrikaner, Slagter's Nek has been a symbol of the tyrannical excess of British legal administration. To the British mind it has sometimes stood, most unjustly, for the character of the Eastern Boer. Neither estimate can be upheld; and the latter is only comparable to an attempt to judge the English national character from a perusal of the Newgate Calendar.

In the wild and mountainous country near the source of the Bavarian's River, and almost upon the Kaffir frontier, there lived a Boer named Frederick Cornelius Bezuidenhout. Inured from his earliest years to defensive warfare against natives and other dangers, and deprived by the conditions of the country of the refining influences of civilisation, he was in character what these circumstances made him, a rough, obstinate and fearless man. One of the servants in his employ as cattle herd was a troublesome Hottentot named Booy, who, according to the statement of Bezuidenhout, had by his neglect lost twenty-one sheep, destroyed a new spade and broken another and done other small damage.<sup>1</sup> He naturally incurred his master's displeasure, and in April, 1813, ran away and went to Mr. Stockenstrom, who was then deputy landdrost at Cradock, complaining that he had been ill-treated and that his master had refused to allow him to take away his property on the expiration of his term of contract. It is not stated of what the ill-treatment consisted, but considering the trouble and damage Booy had caused, it was probably nothing more than a well-merited thrashing. Mr. Stockenstrom summoned Bezuidenhout to appear before him. Instead of presenting himself, however, he wrote a letter and gave his version, from which it appeared that besides the

<sup>1</sup> Farm servants were paid partly or wholly in cattle, sheep or goats. The animals which thus became the property of the servants were allowed still to graze upon the same lands, and thus the servant, as it were, farmed on his own account upon his master's pastures and in competition with his master. Arrangements were sometimes made whereby the servant paid his master for the use of such pasture by giving up a certain proportion of the increase of his stock.

damage and loss above referred to, there had been money and cattle transactions between himself and Booy, whereby Booy was his debtor; he further maintained that Booy, like his other servants, had been supplied abundantly with food and, in other ways, had been well treated. Mr. Stockenstrom mediated and succeeded in settling matters amicably, persuading Booy to return to Bezuidenhout's service.

About two months after this, Booy again ran away, going this time to Graaff Reinet and complaining to the landdrost that he could not get the wages due to him. Bezuidenhout was in consequence called upon to appear before the Board of Landdrost and Haemraaden. Apparently without the slightest intention of disobeying the order, he did not attend the board, but wrote a perfectly respectful letter to the "Hon. the Landdrost of the Hon. Colony of Graaff Reinet," dated June 28th, 1813, giving an account of the trouble Booy was causing him, and expressing his willingness to forego part of what he (Booy) owed him. "I would certainly come myself, but I cannot possibly leave home, as I have nobody with me except my son . . . and I also hope that Mr. Landdrost will not take it amiss in me that I cannot come myself. I remain with hearty greeting, your Honour's obedient servant, who signs himself with reverence, FREDERICK CORNELIUS BEZUIDENHOUT." No notice seems to have been taken of Bezuidenhout's sending his defence in writing instead of appearing in person, and the matter was again terminated satisfactorily.

At this time, Booy's term of contract expired, and he was free to leave Bezuidenhout and to hire himself to some one else. He, however, *voluntarily* contracted himself for another year's service with Bezuidenhout.<sup>1</sup> This would indicate that the ill-treatment of which he complained could not have been of such a nature as to inspire him with much fear of Bezuidenhout or to have merited the terms "brutality" and "cruel ill-treatment" which have been used in connection with this affair. Booy returned to Bezuidenhout for a time and then again ran away to Graaff Reinet with complaints to the landdrost. This time he charged his master, not with actual ill-treatment, but with having *threatened* to take vengeance on

<sup>1</sup> See letter of Stockenstrom to Fischer, *Slagter's Nek Rebellion*, edited by Leibbrandt, p. 898.

CHAP. him.<sup>1</sup> On this frivolous charge, Bezuidenhout was again called  
 XI. before the local court of Graaff Reiniet and ordered to show the contract of hire with the Hottentot. The previous summons having been satisfied by a defence in writing, Bezuidenhout adopted the same course again. On November 20th, 1813, he wrote:—

“MR. LANDDROST STOCKENSTROM,

“This serves to inform you that I have received orders from the Field-Cornet, Philippus A. Opperman, that I must send him the hire contract of the Hottentot man, Booy; but, Mr. Landdrost, I do not desire [to have] the Hottentot again, because he teases me too much, and the few servants (volk) whom I still have, and who are faithful to me, he seeks to seduce also and instigate [against me]. With the mouth of truth I can declare that in nothing have I ill-treated him, as is also well known to my Field-Cornet and neighbours, and that I give him no cause to run away continually. But I think that if Mr. Landdrost had had given him a sound thrashing the first time, he would not have run away the second time without reason. Hence my request that Mr. Landdrost may send the Hottentot with the Field-Cornet to fetch his goods, for I lay claim to nothing of his property, but what he owes me I shall deduct.

“I remain, with much reverence, your Honour’s obedient servant, who signs himself,

“FREDERICK CORNELIUS BEZUIDENHOUT.

“P.S.—I would certainly (wel) have come myself but I cannot possibly leave home, also I cannot endure riding so far.”

With reference to this last statement, there was some reason for believing that Bezuidenhout could not ride, for he was said to be suffering from gout and had been seen getting about on crutches.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Do we see in this the result of the procedure of the Black Circuit? Did Booy feel encouraged to bring charges against his master on the slightest pretext from the apparent partiality which had been shown to the Hottentots and, what seemed to those unacquainted with the real objects of that circuit, the determination to find guilt in the Boers? If so, then “Slagter’s Nek” may be traced ultimately to Bethelsdorp missionary interference.

<sup>2</sup>See evidence of Opperman, *Slagter’s Nek Rebellion*, by Leibbrandt, p. 902.

Booy did not return to Bezuidenhout but went to Grahams-town and enlisted in the Cape Corps. The adjustment of his affairs had not been made, and an end was put to the matter for a time by the troubles with the Kaffirs and the necessary commando which occupied attention at the end of 1813.

In May, 1814, Booy again visited Mr. Stockenstrom about his property, which Bezuidenhout retained. As Mr. Stockenstrom was at this time making an official tour through the country, he visited the field-cornet Opperman and instructed him to make another demand upon Bezuidenhout. This was done and answered as follows on May 31st, 1814:—

“ESTEEMED COUSIN AND GOOD FRIEND PHILIPPUS A. OPPERMAN,

“This serves to inform you that I have received your letter with the Hottentot named Booy, and understand from it that I must deliver to the Hottentot Booy his goods, which I shall certainly do completely, provided that he also pays me what he owes me. . . . I have already long ago written to the Landdrost of the loss caused me by Booy, and what he owes me, but of that nothing is mentioned in your letter, . . . my friendly request is that you may come over yourself to mediate in the affair, otherwise Booy may again vilify me before the Landdrost and tell all sorts of lies.

“Well, I remain with good expectation of your coming, and after greeting,

“Your devoted Cousin, and good friend,

“FREDERICK C. BEZUIDENHOUT.”

Had Opperman done his duty and complied with this friendly request, the subsequent trouble would in all probability have been averted and “Slagter’s Nek” would not have been one of the most prominent features in South African history. This was not the only particular in which this man showed himself unfitted for the responsibility which was entrusted to him. The chief object of the creation of the offices of field-cornet and haemraad was to settle disputes of this nature and to maintain peace without reference to the more rigid operation of the regular court of law. This must also be borne in mind when considering the gravity of Bezuidenhout’s action in sending his defences in writing, instead

CHAP. of attending in person before the Board of Landdrost and  
XI. Haemraaden. Such action can scarcely be regarded as a determination to resist the law. The letter which Opperman sent to Bezuidenhout was taken by Booy himself. Words arose between them. According to Bezuidenhout, Booy was insolent and so irritated him that he lost his temper and gave the Hottentot a thrashing, breaking his stick over his back. This sent Booy, having left without his cattle, again running after Mr. Stockenstrom, whom he met on his return journey from the Zuurveld. Mr. Stockenstrom left a letter with Opperman ordering Bezuidenhout to appear before the Board in Graaff Reinet on July 5th, 1814, and threatened that if he did not appear, he would be prosecuted before the Commission of Circuit. On receipt of this Bezuidenhout rode as far as Opperman's (three hours' distance) and, as before, gave reasons why he could not go to Graaff Reinet. On December 10th he was again summoned, but on this occasion gave as his answer to the messenger of justice, T. B. Wiese, "I shall be present without lawful hindrance". He did not appear however. At this stage the worst features of the case commenced, and whether, on the former occasions, it was from general ignorance, or from reliance upon the more easy procedure of the local court that Bezuidenhout had not paid due respect to the various summonses, there can be no doubt that he now assumed an attitude of defiance and determination to resist the law. On March 18th, 1815, he was again visited by a messenger of justice. Having received the message, he flew into a temper, and shaking his fist and cursing, said: "What does the landdrost think? What does Stockenstrom think? I do not care for my life just as much as for nothing." The messenger answered: "Father Bezuidenhout, I come not to quarrel, but only to summon you, only tell me whether you shall appear or not". To this Bezuidenhout replied: "I cannot appear". Lastly, on September 12th, 1815, he was again summoned, when his answer was: "It is impossible to appear, because my bodily constitution does not permit it". The case came before the judges of circuit, Messrs. W. D. Jennings and F. R. Bressler—the latter a name of unpleasant memory in Graaff Reinet—on October 5th, 1815. Bezuidenhout was absent. "The Court having . . . noted the obstinate non-appearance of the





*Photo: C. H. Roberts, Esq.*

**SLAGIER'S NEX.**

(The hill on the right is probably where the last stand was made.)

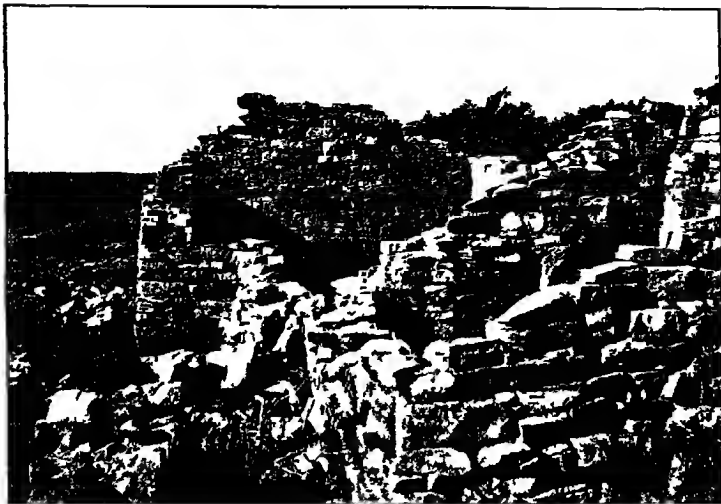
defendant, and doing justice in the name of and on behalf of His Majesty of Great Britain, condemns the defendant because of his disobedience to the orders of his superiors, and contempt of judicial authority, to be confined for one month in the public prison in this Drostdy, with condemnation of the defendant in the costs incurred in the case and reserves to the R. O.<sup>1</sup> Prosecutor his further action against the defendant for his ill-treatment of the Hottentot Booy." The above sentence having been passed, the under-bailiff, J. Londt, was despatched from Graaff Reinet for the purpose of arresting Bezuidenhout—an undertaking which was thought to be not altogether free from danger. Londt, therefore, in the first instance, rode to a field-cornet named Olivier and handed to him a letter from the landdrost in which he was instructed to collect four or five men, and, with them, to accompany Londt. Olivier, however, refused. He contended that Bezuidenhout did not live in his ward, and, further, expressed his unwillingness to expose himself to the probable consequences of Bezuidenhout's wrath. Londt sent a message back to the landdrost acquainting him with this, and then went on to another farm near Cradock, where he waited for further instructions from Graaff Reinet. In the evening of that same day (Saturday) he received an answer, and also a letter which he was to deliver to Captain Andrews at Van Aardt's post. Captain Andrews was asked to furnish Londt with military assistance. On his arrival at Van Aardt's post on the following Monday morning, Londt was sent by Captain Andrews to the next post, Roode Waal, a little above the present Cookhouse Station, where Lieutenant Rossouw was in command. There a party, consisting of Lieutenants Rossouw and MacKay, Londt, a sergeant, a corporal and fourteen privates, was formed and, towards evening, set out for Bezuidenhout's place. At ten o'clock that night they arrived at Opperman's and, as it was considered expedient to keep the object of their mission unknown to him, the party remained out of sight by halting at some little distance from the house. Rossouw and Londt, accompanied by two servants and a mounted orderly, went to the house and awakened Opperman. They pretended that their object was to get to Grahamstown but could not find the road and were

<sup>1</sup> *Ratione Officii.*



CHAP. therefore under the necessity of disturbing the field-cornet's  
XI. rest. Having engaged him in general conversation they elicited from him the direction to Bezuidenhout's place as well as his Christian name, the discovery of which was the real object of their visit. With this information they set out for some little distance in the direction of Grahamstown and then, turning back, followed Opperman's direction to Bezuidenhout's farm. About nine o'clock the next morning, October 10th, on reaching the top of a ridge of rising ground they came suddenly in sight of the place they were in search of. They found that their arrival was expected, for they saw one man, whom they took to be Bezuidenhout, followed by others, all carrying guns, hurrying to a natural rampart formed by some large stones. Bezuidenhout had evidently reasoned within himself that the result of his non-appearance in Graaff Reinet would lead to forcible measures being taken for his apprehension. Two days previously he told a Hottentot servant, Hans, that he thought soldiers might come and that he (Hans) was to keep a sharp look-out, and, in the event of any soldiers appearing, to give him instant warning. Besides this Hottentot, there were on the farm with Bezuidenhout, a youth of eighteen, Jacob Erasmus, who was in charge of his brother's cattle which were being pastured there; another youth, F. Labuscagne, also acting as a cattle herd, and Bezuidenhout's wife. Lieutenant Rossouw's party was caught sight of by all these people the instant it reached the top of the ridge, and immediate preparations were made for defence. Bezuidenhout himself took two guns and compelled Erasmus and Hans to take one each, and to follow him to their first shelter. He then shouted out to the soldiers, warning them that if they approached nearer he would fire; this, however, was not heard on account of the high wind which was blowing. Lieutenant Rossouw gave orders to fix bayonets and to rush on but not to fire. As they got nearer to the stones ten or twelve shots<sup>1</sup> were fired at them, and as this firing became brisker, the attacking party also commenced firing. This drove Bezuidenhout and his companions from their position. They fled to another shelter on the far side of the river bed; but as it did not appear suit-

<sup>1</sup> Considering Erasmus did not fire at all (see evidence) the other two must have been very busy in firing this number in the short time.



*Photo A B Blilston 11*

NEARER VIEW OF KAIFIR DRIFT RUINS



*Photo C H Roberts 154*

VIEW SHOWING RIDGE OVER WHICH THE SOLDIERS CAME TO BLZUIDENHOUT'S FARM



*Photo C H Roberts, Lsq*

**THE CAVE.**

(The Cave in which Erasmus was hidden is to the right behind the bush )

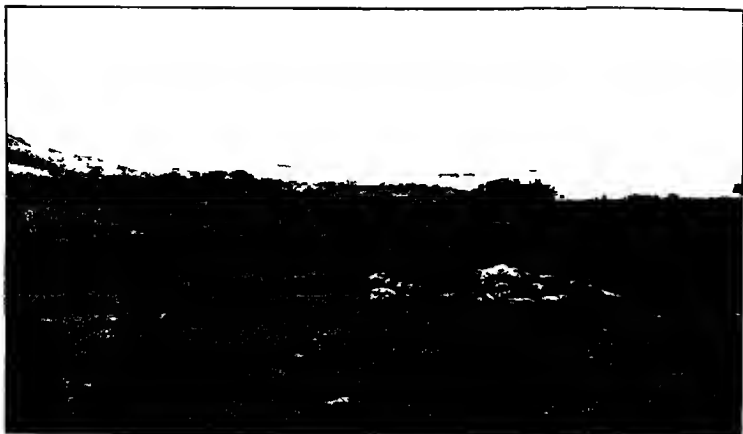
able, they recrossed and found two caves on a rocky eminence, and partly hidden by bush, which seemed, and proved eventually to be, an almost impregnable position. This second movement was unseen by the soldiers, who therefore crossed the river (in which there was probably no water) and were soon fired at from the caves on the near side. The men were then ordered to storm the rocky ridge, but it was found impossible to do so, as the caves could only be approached by one man at a time, and Bezuidenhout could easily shoot any one who dared to go near his retreat. Lieutenants Rossouw and MacKay went to the top of the ledge under which the holes were situated and from which they could easily converse with Bezuidenhout though they could not see him. They called upon him repeatedly to surrender, assuring him that no harm would be done to him and that he would be permitted to inspan his waggon and ride comfortably to Graaff Reinet. For over three hours these negotiations lasted, but Bezuidenhout still refused to surrender. Fresh attempts were then made to dislodge him, and a Hottentot sergeant named Joseph had the courage to ascend to the cave and to talk further with Bezuidenhout. Joseph, finding that Bezuidenhout's gun was pointed at him and hearing the men from below call to him, "Sergeant, he will shoot you," lifted his own gun quickly and fired. The bullet passed through Bezuidenhout's left arm and chest and came out by the right shoulderblade. He fell backwards dead. What actually happened in the cave is perhaps best told in the (translated) words of the survivor, Hans.<sup>1</sup> After leaving the first place on the river, Hans says that "The old man said to me, 'Let us go to the cleft<sup>2</sup> where the honey hole is,' ordering us at the same time to keep good courage and not to leave him in the lurch. Whereupon I went to that hole with the old man, where, having sat some time, the firing was discontinued, and they called out to the master, 'Old Frederick, come out,' and that they would not shoot any more; whereupon he said that he would be d——d; that he would not come out. Then they begged him from above to come out, that no harm would happen to him, and that he could inspan his waggon or take his horses with him. Thereupon I also

<sup>1</sup> *Vide Slagter's Nek Rebellion*, Blue Book, p. 911.

<sup>2</sup> See the illustration.

CHAP. begged him, which he stubbornly refused, saying : ' Even if I  
XI. come out, I shall for all that be hanged. Shoot me dead. If they shoot me dead, they will get me into their hands.' Thereupon a sergeant came to a rock near this hole, whereupon the master asked, ' Who are you ? ' He answered, ' Joseph,' and asked the master whether he might come to him, but he (the master) then said, ' No, keep away from my muzzle'. Joseph then said, ' Master Frederick, put your gun down ; I shall put down mine, and let us talk together'. Whereupon the master said, ' I do not talk any more, keep away from me'. I then also said, ' Master, if you please, let us go out'. He then said to him (? the sergeant), ' I shall come out, but you (the soldiers) must go on one side, beyond the dung kraal ; then I will have my horses fetched and ride with these gentlemen only as far as Frans Labuscagne'. To which I replied, ' Master, let me fetch the horses,' as I only wished to get away from him. But he said, ' No, you remain here, not a step away from me'. After that Joseph asked him if he would swear that he would ride away with them, and this he did, and said that he would ride to Labuscagne, and there request two men to ride with him thence to Graaff Reinet in company of those gentlemen, adding, ' The gentlemen must also swear that they will not apprehend him'. This Joseph repeated to the gentlemen, who said, ' By my soul'. Then he said, ' By my soul is to me no oath, they must swear as I have done'. They then again said, ' By my soul,' when he replied, ' No, I see it all, you wish to apprehend me, d——n it, I shall not come out. If you shoot me dead you can get me. Now I do not speak a word more.' He then did not speak a word more to them. I then said to him, ' Master, let us go out,' but he replied, ' No, I shall not go out,' and after that remained silent notwithstanding they spoke to him. Then the soldiers began to come round and a boulder rolled on my arm from the top of the krantz. I then stood up and wished to get behind that boulder in order to shelter myself, when he also stood up to follow me, and a stone came down on his forehead, which made him fall down again, and when he stood up for the second time he received a shot in his left arm through his chest, the bullet passing out through his right shoulder. He then called out, ' Boy, my arm is off,' and thus fell down. I immedi-





*Photo C H Roberts Esq.*

F. C. BEZUIDENHOUT'S GRAVE

(His house stood probably near the "Karee Boom" tree seen in the picture)



*Photo C H Roberts Esq*

VILW ON BAVIAAN'S RIVER.

ately ran out and asked for pardon, surrendering my gun to the soldiers, who afterwards took the corpse out of the hole." CHAP.  
XI.

Erasmus, who was hiding in another cave, came out when he knew that Bezuidenhout was shot and also surrendered himself. After Lieutenant Rossouw had taken the two men prisoners and had viewed the body, he commenced the return march. The party was met shortly by six men on horseback; they were Gerrit Bezuidenhout, brother of Frederick, with his four sons and a Hottentot. Having heard the firing and thinking there was an attack by Kaffirs or Bushmen, they had hurried out to assist. Lieutenant Rossouw's party passed them without speaking, although they were asked the reason for the expedition. In due course the two prisoners arrived at Graaff Reinet and were tried on October 21st, 1815. Erasmus was not punished further than the imprisonment he had suffered previous to the trial, as it was proved that he had not fired a single shot. Hans was condemned to be thrashed severely and to be imprisoned for three months. Thus ended the first act in this drama.

Among the persons, about twenty in number, who were brought together at the burial of Frederick Bezuidenhout, was a brother, Johannes Bezuidenhout, who, most of all, took the affair to heart. He, like all the others, except the officials concerned, knew nothing of the events which led immediately to the death of Frederick Bezuidenhout, though all must have been perfectly aware of the relations which, for over two and a half years, had existed between him and the authorities. In violent language, Johannes Bezuidenhout declared that, even if he had to wait ten years, he would revenge his brother's death, and mentioned especially the field-cornet, Opperman, and Lieutenant Rossouw as objects of his wrath. The sentiments he expressed do not appear to have been received by his hearers in any other spirit than that of commiseration; and some of them, in consequence of the dangerous language he employed, thought it prudent to leave before the proceedings terminated. It is not easy to find any evidence which proves that at this funeral rebellious plots and conspiracies were entertained by any one else than Johannes Bezuidenhout him-



CHAP. self, or that in drunken excesses "Patriots" determined on the  
 XI. overthrow of the Government.<sup>1</sup>

In grief and anger, Bezuidenhout left the grave of his brother and returned to his home. He resided in the Tarka, the country on the north of the Winterberg Mountains, on a farm belonging to and occupied by two brothers, Diedrik and Christiaan Muller. With him there lived one Cornelius Faber, a man sixty years of age, whose sister he had married. The farm was a long day's ride from the Baviaan's River. That part of the country was very near to the north-eastern frontier and quite unprotected against the Kaffirs. With these natives some of the isolated farmers, in spite of the orders of Government and perhaps from the fear of offering any resistance, maintained a fairly friendly intercourse. Visiting Kaffirs (Kuijerende Kaffirs) were frequently at one or other of these farms where they obtained food and "learnt the news".

On his return, Bezuidenhout opened his mind to some of the visitors from Kaffirland and discussed with them the possibility of enlisting the co-operation of their tribes "in driving the English back into the sea". Nothing definite seems to have been decided upon, and all may have been idle talk prompted by Bezuidenhout's feelings, and as such, might have died out as time assuaged his grief. At this juncture, however, there appeared upon the scene another individual who fanned the smouldering embers into flame and was chiefly instrumental in causing the disaster which followed. Hendrik Prinsloo was son of old Martinus Prinsloo, one of the leaders in the Van Jaarsveld rising of 1799, who had been imprisoned in the Castle at Cape Town and had gained his freedom by the general pardon of De Mist in 1803. He had then returned to his farm near the present Somerset East. The Prinsloos were not in any way connected with the Bezuidenhouts, nor concerned in their troubles and disputes with the authorities, the former were inhabitants of the Boschberg (Somerset East), while the latter resided chiefly in the distant Baviaan's River district. Hendrik Prinsloo, however, made the quarrel partly his own, and incited Johannes Bezuidenhout to the course of violence which terminated in his death. Many Prinsloos were implicated in these affairs, but they played very different parts,

<sup>1</sup> *Vide Pringle's Narrative*, p. 71.

some were mildly sympathetic, while others used every endeavour to prevent the mischief which they saw in progress. Towards the end of October, Hendrik Prinsloo set out on his mischievous errand to the Tarka, and early one morning arrived at the house of the Mullers. In a somewhat excited and mysterious manner he entered and asked them why they were sitting still while innocent men were being shot, and whether they were men or only fit to be beaten out of bed with sticks by women. Asked what he would have them do, he answered, Drive the English out of the country, because the land rents have been made so high and Hottentots are preferred to burghers. Bezuidenhout, who was at a short distance tending his cattle, went also to the house on seeing the horseman approach. He and Prinsloo went away together soon afterwards and made their way to a place called Paling Kloof,<sup>1</sup> where dwelt one Stephanus Cornelius Bothma. There they found four Kaffirs who were making a friendly call upon Bothma,<sup>2</sup> and who, from their conversation, seemed to have been frequent visitors among the inhabitants of those parts. Bezuidenhout asked them if the Kaffirs were ready, to which they replied, "Yes, but why does not Bezuidenhout himself or some other Dutchman go to Kaffirland, as the chiefs do not place much reliance upon messages sent by their people". Bezuidenhout said he would send Faber, but that he was afraid the Kaffirs would kill him. They assured him that such would not be the case. In the end it was decided to seek the assistance of the chiefs by sending some one to Kaffirland.

On their return to the Mullers' farm in the evening, Prinsloo rode back to the Boschberg. Bezuidenhout seemed much encouraged by his visit, for Prinsloo had told him that the inhabitants of Brintjes Hooghte and the Zuurveld were united in this move. This was perfectly untrue, for up to this time nobody, except the few principals concerned, had any suspicion of these rebellious designs. Diedrik Muller told him that he was engaged in a nasty business, which if pursued would bring him into great trouble, and advised him to bring any grievance he felt he had before the Court of Justice.

In spite of this good advice, however, immediate prepara-

<sup>1</sup> A little to the south of the present town of Tarkastad.

<sup>2</sup> In accordance with their idea of friendliness they helped themselves to some of Bothma's sheep on their departure.

CHAP. tions were made, and two days afterwards the expedition left  
XI. for Kaffirland. The party consisted of Faber; a youth named  
Adriaan Engelbrecht, who, never having been among the  
Kaffirs before, feared the journey, but was compelled by Be-  
zuidenhout to go; a foreigner, Frans Marais; and a Hottentot  
gun-bearer named Bambeloe. Marais, a Hungarian by birth,  
had arrived in the Colony with the Dutch artillery and had  
deserted at the battle of Blaauwberg in 1806. Remaining in  
the Colony, but without the permission or pass which all  
foreigners were required to possess, he became a police-rider  
at Tulbagh, where his conduct procured him a flogging and  
dismissal. Subsequent adventures resulted in his imprison-  
ment at Uitenhage. While being conveyed thence to Graaff  
Reinet as a prisoner he managed to escape, and led a vaga-  
bond life in such out-of-the-way regions as the Tarka, where  
besides occasionally making shoes he was always ready for  
any rascality which would procure him food and tobacco.  
Faber was the leader of the party, and was entrusted with the  
negotiations, as he had lived in Kaffirland and was well known  
to Gaika and other chiefs. The evidence as to what passed  
between Faber and Gaika is based upon the statement of the  
Kaffir Nootka, the interpreter on the occasion. At the sub-  
sequent judicial investigation it was acknowledged by Faber  
to have been the truth. After giving his own version of the  
death of Frederick Bezuidenhout, Faber proceeded to improve  
upon the statement of Prinsloo to Johannes Bezuidenhout.  
He said that all the Dutch, from the Baviaan's River through  
Graaff Reinet to Cape Town, were united, and co-operating  
with them were 600 Hollanders, all prepared to drive out  
the English, who were only a mere handful. It did not strike  
Faber (as, judging from subsequent events, it must have struck  
Gaika) that in these circumstances the assistance of the Kaffirs  
could hardly be necessary. The chief grievance mentioned  
was that,—referring to the new perpetual quit rent tenure,—  
the English had made the "places" so small, and that when the  
people complained that the cattle "ate one another dead," the  
English answered, "Then sell them and make them fewer".  
In the end Faber obtained no further satisfaction or promise  
than that Gaika would consult Ndhambi and other chiefs.  
With this the party returned to the Tarka.

While Faber was busy in Kaffirland, Prinsloo and Bezuidenhout moved cautiously about the country, endeavouring to obtain support. In this they did not meet with much success. The inhabitants, as a whole, had no supposed causes for complaint and made none. Persuasion failing, Bezuidenhout resorted to threats of destruction by the Kaffirs. All had too good reason to know that these people needed but little encouragement to invade the frontier districts and carry murder and rapine to extremes. By his announcement of Faber's mission and by his embellishments of the truth concerning it, he gradually obtained an influence over the minds of the people, so that in the end many of them suffered themselves to be hurried away without reflection, from fear of the threatened attack.

One of the first, who was approached in this manner, was a farmer named J. D. Ouwerkamp. He immediately went to Stephanus van Wyk, the field-cornet of the Tarka, and under a pledge of secrecy stated all he had heard. Van Wyk promptly rode over to the Mullers, and, in accordance with the duty which his office imposed on him, made inquiries. This was on October 29th, about two days after Faber had set out for Kaffirland. The Mullers, who had seen with concern the actions of Prinsloo and Bezuidenhout, welcomed the action of the field-cornet and gladly, though in confidence, told him all they knew. Bezuidenhout, who was then upon the place, was interviewed by Van Wyk. He said he could not forget the death of his brother, who had been unjustly shot, and that he would not rest until those who had been instrumental, namely, Opperman, Rossouw and Stockenstrom, had been punished. Van Wyk endeavoured to reason with him, acquainting him with the true details which led to his brother's death, and at the same time, advising him, if he still felt he had any grievance, to memorialise the Court of Justice; he even offered there and then to draw up the document in Bezuidenhout's behalf. To this he at first consented, but refused to trust Van Wyk in the matter, as he did not know him sufficiently well. Bezuidenhout suggested Stephanus C. Bothma and another, Barend Bester. As this was agreed to, messengers were sent to fetch them. On their arrival, however, Bezuidenhout altered his mind and refused to take the wise course which had been suggested to him. Van Wyk, finding it useless to attempt

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XI. he reported all he had heard to Mr. Van der Graaff, the deputy landdrost.

Among those who first heard rumours of the approaching trouble was the field-cornet, Opperman. Long before this he knew perfectly well that he was regarded with dislike and suspicion by the Bezuidenhouts. He was therefore probably more alarmed than surprised when one, Piet Prinsloo, called at his place shortly after the death of Frederick Bezuidenhout, and told him that he was looked upon as a traitor and held partly responsible for what had happened. Late at night on November 5th, a young man, Gerrit Bezuidenhout, nephew of Johannes, called at Opperman's on his way from Graaff Reinet and told him that he had heard something very strange and thought he ought to inform him as field-cornet about it. It was that some people in the Tarka had gone to Kaffirland to enlist the assistance of the Kaffirs in order to drive the soldiers to Algoa Bay. Opperman was greatly alarmed, and as soon as Gerrit Bezuidenhout left, he sent his list of burghers and other papers pertaining to his office to one Willem F. Kruger, whom he appointed field-cornet in his place, and then immediately fled through the darkness out of harm's way to Graaff Reinet. On his way he met, the next morning, Willem Prinsloo (usually known as Groot Willem) and carefully sounded him as to the rumours from the Tarka. Willem Prinsloo acknowledged that he also had heard of them. He expressed his surprise that Opperman should be abandoning his post at so serious a juncture, and said that with a few faithful people and a certain trusty Hottentot he could undertake to prevent the Kaffirs from coming. It should be stated here that this Prinsloo, a man of fifty-three years of age, was sincerely loyal to the Government, and, as will be seen later, did all he could to quell the disturbance. Kruger was unwilling to undertake the duties which had been so summarily thrust upon him, as he was nearly fifty years of age and did not feel equal to the amount of riding which the office necessarily involved. He would probably have been still more reluctant could he have foreseen the difficulties and misfortunes which, through little fault of his own, eventually overtook him. Opperman gave him even no suspicion of the storm which was supposed to be brewing, and up to that time he

seems to have been unaware of the rumours of the Kaffir invasion. Having received the papers he rode over to Opperman's place in order to return them and to excuse himself, but found that the field-cornet had fled, and that Mrs. Opperman was hurriedly packing her household effects, preparatory to following her husband. He therefore felt compelled to assume the responsibility, and thus returned to his own place as provisional field-cornet.

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When Opperman arrived at Graaff Reinet and reported what he had heard, steps were immediately taken for defence against the Kaffirs. Orders were sent to the various field-cornets, instructing them to call out the burghers in their respective districts, and, armed, to hold themselves in readiness.

Bezuidenhout and Hendrik Prinsloo were, in the meantime, involving themselves deeper and deeper in the whirlpool of rebellion. They now made no secret of the intrigue with the Kaffirs, but used it as a threat of destruction to all who would not join them. The idea conveyed was that the Kaffirs would act under the direction of Bezuidenhout, who thereby, in many cases, came to be credited with power and influence which he did not possess. One of the prisoners at the subsequent trials stated, in connection with this, that he was afraid to disobey Bezuidenhout, for there might be a possibility of obtaining a pardon from the judges, but there could be none from the Kaffirs. Besides visiting the inhabitants individually, attempts were made to reach the more distant ones by letters. The fortunate miscarriage of one of these led to the immediate suppression of the whole movement and the rescue of many who, unable to help themselves, were being urged on to ruin. On the night of November 8th, the Mullers were awakened by the arrival of Prinsloo and his brother-in-law, Theunis de Klerk, who had now become one of the leaders. Diedrik Muller overheard De Klerk say that he was prepared to shoot all who would not join them, even his own father, if need be. With this encouragement Diedrik Muller himself was asked whether he would assist. Apprehensive for his safety, he consented. The two visitors were soon joined by Bezuidenhout and Faber, and it then appeared that the object of the meeting was to take steps for enlisting the co-operation of the inhabitants of the Rhenosterberg, more to the north. The only person known to them

CHAP. in those parts was one Jacobus Kruger, though there does not  
 XI. seem to have been any reason for believing that that individual was in sympathy with them. It was decided to send a letter to Kruger. Though both Bezuidenhout and Prinsloo could write, they sent off that same night messengers to Stephanus Bothma at Paling Kloof. Bothma arrived just before daybreak, bringing with him a friend named Andries Meyer. Shortly after it was light, Bothma was given a sheet of paper and ordered to write at the dictation of Bezuidenhout and Prinsloo. The document when finished was signed by Prinsloo, and ran as follows :—

“DEAR AND MUCH ESTEEMED COUSIN, JACOBUS KRUGER,

“I wish you the most necessary for Soul and Body. Cousin, I write to you in the Name of the Burghers of the whole of Bruintjes Hooghte, Zuurveld and Tarka to represent the Business to your District, and especially the Field-Cornet Van der Walt, that we have unanimously resolved, according to our Oath, which we took to our Mother Country, to remain as Protectors to remove the God-forgotten tyrants and villains, as every one, let him be who he may, is convinced with God, how shocking, and how God forgotten it goes with our Country, which we took an oath for, for every one is convinced, whether or not they shall be present at the appointed date ; and to you I trust the Business to bring it under the people’s eyes as speedily as possible, whether they will or not, and I send you the letter in the hands of the Burgher, Christiaan Muller, and request an answer with the bearer what the people say ; the consequences speak for themselves, I trust you to bring it under the people’s eyes. And this letter I recommend in your hands to burn ; you see my great confidence in you, the letter serves you all. I therefore hope you will burn it directly you bring it under the people’s eyes verbally. Now I trust in you, and am, with esteem and greetings to you, your Cousin,

“HENDRIK FREDRIK PRINSLOO, MART’S SON.

“November 9th, 1815.”

This letter was given to Christiaan Muller with orders to ride off immediately to Jacobus Kruger. Muller, however, managed, before setting out, to consult with his brother Die-

drik, for they were both determined to take no part in these unlawful designs. Diedrik advised his brother to take the letter to the field-cornet, Van Wyk. This was done. Van Wyk immediately took it to Mr. Van der Graaff at Cradock, who sent one copy of it to Major Fraser at Grahamstown, and another to Captain Andrews at Van Aardt's post and the original to Mr. Stockenstrom in Graaff Reinet. Prinsloo returned to his home and there rested until his peace was disturbed by unlooked-for results of the above letter. The receipt of it called forth the immediate activity of the authorities. Mr. Van der Graaff ordered the field-cornets, Van Heerden and Jacob Venter, to call out fifty burghers and to station them at the posts, while Van Wyk was ordered to go first to Paling Kloof to learn what he could and then to ride from place to place to counteract the influence of Bezuidenhout. Captain Andrews sent off a small patrol in search of Prinsloo. About noon on Monday, November 13th, this party took him by surprise at his own house and hurriedly marched him off to the place of the haemraaden, Barend de Klerk, brother of Theunis. They waited there for further assistance, as it was feared attempts would be made to rescue him. Towards evening a detachment of dragoons and the field-commandant, Nel, arrived, and Prinsloo was taken on to Van Aardt's post and safely lodged in prison. This arrest was so quietly and expeditiously done that the greatest mystery prevailed for a time as to the reason for these proceedings. Except the few concerned, no one knew anything about the letter, and as Prinsloo himself did not know that it had not reached its intended destination, he was equally ignorant as to why he was made a prisoner.

The daily expectation of the arrival of the Kaffirs was prolonged, and threatened failure to the insurgents' schemes. Bezuidenhout himself, knowing that his strength and influence depended upon some demonstration being made by those people, became concerned at their inactivity. On Saturday, therefore (Prinsloo's letter was written on the previous Thursday), he sent another expedition to Gaika. Faber was again the chief intermediary and was accompanied by Marais, Volkert Delport, William Prinsloo (son of Joachim Prinsloo, another branch of the house of Prinsloo), and a Hottentot gun-



CHAP. XI. bearer, Cobus, who was in the service of Diedrik Muller but was forced away by Bezuidenhout. This party went forward with a view to learning the intentions of the Kaffirs and, if need be, to hasten the action of Gaika. In the meantime, Bezuidenhout was straining every nerve and, by deceit and threats, striving to gain recruits. The difficulty he met with in these endeavours was a striking testimony to the law-abiding and peaceable character of the Dutch inhabitants generally.

On November 12th, S. C. Bothma, who acted as a kind of private secretary to Bezuidenhout, wrote, by Bezuidenhout's orders and in his name, to A. C. Greyling, the field-cornet of Zwager's Hoek: "I request you or order you to command your men to be present on the 14th of this month at the place of Theunis de Klerk, without the least delay to extirpate the villains of Englishmen out of our country. Take care of the blood under your charge, you may truly believe it, if you are negligent, JOHANNES BEZUIDENHOUT." Greyling, a few hours afterwards, received a letter from Mr. Van der Graaff informing him of the arrest of Prinsloo, and almost at the same time there arrived further "orders" from Bezuidenhout. Greyling called out his men and read these documents to them and then asked them whom they would serve, the Government or Bezuidenhout; without the slightest hesitation the whole, thirty-six sent up an unanimous shout for the Government. Individuals who were so unfortunate as to be met or overtaken by Bezuidenhout, while riding from place to place, were compelled to join him under threats of being immediately shot or of having their homes and families destroyed the next day by Kaffirs. Such were the cases of P. R. Botha, who was caught early one morning while fetching his cattle, Lucas van Vuuren, Cornelius van der Nest and others. Such also was the case of old Pieter Willemsse Prinsloo, nearly sixty years of age, who was travelling about the country in search of plants and herbs, wherewith he undertook to deal with all diseases the doctors could not cure. He combined, perhaps not appropriately, with this humane occupation the further office of undertaker, and when captured by Bezuidenhout, he had with him a waggon laden with wood for coffins. It is difficult to regard such people as these as determined rebels and desperadoes.

The intelligence of Prinsloo's arrest spread very rapidly;

almost before he had arrived at Van Aardt's on Monday evening, it was known throughout the districts and gave additional impetus to the movements then on foot. Among those to whom Mr. Van der Graaff sent orders on the receipt of Prinsloo's letter was the field-cornet, Opperman. As, however, he had not heard of that individual's flight, the papers, though addressed to him, fell into the hands of W. F. Kruger, who, actuated by a sense of duty, immediately commenced to visit the persons concerned and command them to assemble in arms for the purpose of repelling the Kaffirs. The place of assembly was a farm on the Baviaan's River belonging to one D. Erasmus. Late in the afternoon of that day (Monday), a number of those thus called out met at that place, and among them appeared Theunis de Klerk. Kruger, in riding from place to place, observed some discontent and heard remarks about one man being shot, and another, referring to Hendrik Prinsloo, being made prisoner. This feeling of uncertainty was apparent among those who had collected together and was further fomented by Theunis de Klerk. When Kruger himself came there, De Klerk told him that Bezuidenhout had sent a message to him, saying that the people were to be kept together until he (Bezuidenhout) arrived. Kruger replied that Bezuidenhout was nothing to him, and that he had, according to his orders, assembled the people for no other purpose than to resist the Kaffirs. He read to them Mr. Van der Graaff's letter, and then asked them if they were for Government as he himself was. As far as the noise and confusion would permit, all were understood to answer in the affirmative except two, Theunis de Klerk and another. Groot Willem Prinsloo further harangued them on the danger of the course to which they were being persuaded, and reminded them of the misfortune which overtook those who were concerned in the Van Jaarsveld affair. Shortly before this, he had met a Kaffir whom he persuaded to return to Kaffirland to tell Gaika and other Kaffirs not to listen to the lying message of Faber. Kruger dismissed the people with orders to meet again in three days' time. His object in acting thus was to gain time in order to find someone younger than himself to relieve him of the anxiety of these duties. When the people had left, he intended to remain that night with Erasmus, but about nine o'clock messengers went

CHAP. to tell him that he was wanted immediately at his own place.  
 XI. When he reached his home, he found a large number of people assembled there. There were present those whom he had so lately dismissed, as well as some from the Tarka, and others collected by Bezuidenhout, who also was present. Bezuidenhout now misappropriated and took command of these people, though he nominated Kruger as their leader. There was some talk about taxes being too heavy; Opperman, Rossouw and others were mentioned as traitors and deserving of being shot, and the determination of immediately attacking the military posts and rescuing Hendrik Prinsloo was expressed. Poor Kruger was in an unfortunate position. There can be little doubt but that he wished to act against these designs; but on being reminded by Theunis de Klerk that, during the commando of old Van der Nest in 1799, he also had behaved as a traitor in siding with the Government, and that the slightest indication of any such disposition now would lead to being immediately shot, he could do nothing but allow himself to be carried along with the current of rebellion. A few of the others, who from this talk discovered that the object of the assembly was different from that which had been represented to them, managed to escape and returned to their homes. Very early the next morning, Tuesday, the 14th, the party rode *via* Slagter's Nek and arrived at a spot about a thousand paces from Van Aardt's,<sup>1</sup> where they arrived at about ten o'clock that morning and halted. On their way they had to pass Lieut. Rossouw's post at Roode Waal, which Bezuidenhout wished then to attack, but on Kruger's representation that Prinsloo might be removed from Van Aardt's post before they got there, the march was continued and thus this design was frustrated, which was the object Kruger had in view.

When Major Fraser, in Grahamstown, received Mr. Van der Graaff's communication he ordered out thirty-six of his men and proceeded without loss of time to Van Aardt's post, where he arrived at daybreak on the 14th. He must have started just about the time when Bezuidenhout's party left Kruger's, for on approaching the post he saw the armed

<sup>1</sup> This spot is now marked by a white marble monument, which may be seen to the east of the railway line between Longhope Siding and Cookhouse. It is about four or five hundred yards from the line.

burghers and estimated their number at 200. If this estimate were anything near correct, which it probably was not, their ranks must have been very rapidly thinned by desertions, for those who actually came in contact with them very soon afterwards found fewer than half that number. Major Fraser, on his arrival at Van Aardt's, immediately sent messengers to the nearest military post, as well as an express to Grahamstown, directing one of the companies of dragoons to march also to that place. Although he knew of Prinsloo's letter, he had not heard of his arrest, and could not account for the hostile demonstration. The armed burghers having halted at the spot already referred to, opened negotiations with the military post by despatching a Hottentot to say that Prinsloo was to be given up to them. Major Fraser sent the man back with the message that they were to send one of themselves. In compliance with this, Nicolaas Balthazar Prinsloo, a youth of twenty and brother to Hendrik, was ordered by Bezuidenhout to go. He went and in a very insolent manner demanded his brother's release. No notice being taken of this, he returned to the party, and then P. L. Erasmus visited the post, and asked that the field-commandant, Nel, who had arrived at Van Aardt's shortly before with some of his men, should go forth and speak with the people. It must have needed some courage to have gone alone to what appeared an angry and armed mob, yet Nel, knowing well that he was disliked by the leaders, went as was requested of him and met with the hostile reception he expected. In spite of the threatening attitude and the accusations of being a traitor, he maintained his position, and refused to conciliate the wrong-doers or to deviate in the slightest from his duty. In answer to the question as to the cause of Prinsloo's arrest, he assured them that if he had done no wrong, no harm would happen to him. Theunis de Klerk wanted the prisoner to be tried by them, when, if they considered him guilty, he would be sent back to the post. Bezuidenhout ordered Nel to call out the Uitenhage burghers to their assistance; he refused on the ground that Bezuidenhout was not a magistrate and had no authority over him. Nel endeavoured to speak with Kruger apart, but Bezuidenhout would not allow it. He then asked him to accompany him back to Major Fraser, which Kruger attempted to do, but was ordered

CHAP. by Bezuidenhout not to move one pace from him. In the end,  
 XI. Nel himself found it difficult to get away, as, when he had mounted his horse, Theunis de Klerk took hold of the bridle and said to him, "I will shoot or you shall shoot me". Others also laid hands upon him. Amid the noise and confusion he eventually managed to free himself, and returned to Van Aardt's.

The disposition to extricate himself from further difficulty which Kruger had shown in his desire to accompany Nel, as well as perhaps the half-hearted enthusiasm which was apparent among the others, induced Bezuidenhout to endeavour to bind these people closer to himself by compelling them to take an oath of fidelity to the cause. He, therefore, as soon as Nel had left, ordered the people to form a ring, and placing Kruger in the middle, made him swear that "as true as there lives a God in Heaven" he would be faithful to them. The others were told to take off their hats as indication of their subscription to the same oath. There were about sixty-five people at that place during these proceedings. In order to strengthen his support, Bezuidenhout, just after the taking of the oath, despatched Abraham Carel Bothma, brother to Stephanus, to Zwager's Hoek and A. H. Klopper to Bruintjes Hooghte to enlist further recruits. Both missions were failures. Bothma, on his journey, wrote a letter to the field-cornet Greyling, his uncle, and signed it in the names of Kruger and Bezuidenhout. This, so Bothma said at his trial, he was ordered to do by Bezuidenhout as well as to use Kruger's name without his knowledge. The letter was as follows:—

"The general Burgher voice requests Field-Cornet Greyling that you will assist with your men against the unrestrained foreign Nation of English, and they have taken Hendrik Kasteel,<sup>1</sup> and Abraham Bothma will further tell you how it is, and he will help you people to rights.

"(Signed) WILLEM KRUGER  
 "and JOHANNES BEZUIDENHOUT."

Bothma himself then took this letter to Greyling. Having

<sup>1</sup> Both Hendrik Prinsloo and his father Martinus were nicknamed "Kasteel," in allusion to the latter having been a prisoner in the Castle or "Kasteel" in Cape Town,

read it, Greyling, in no compromising terms, angrily expressed his disapproval of all this and told Bothma that the letter should be sent to Major Fraser. Six men were sent on this duty, but meeting with Bezuidenhout's party, three were detained by him while the other three were prevented from going to Van Aardt's and so returned to Greyling. Bothma returned to Bezuidenhout. Klopper was no more fortunate in his mission. He visited a few people and represented to them the danger of being immediately murdered by Kaffirs to which they exposed themselves by refusing their aid, and added, picturesquely, that, so far, people had been taken with cold tongs, but that was no more, people now would be taken with hot tongs. Besides the two above-mentioned messengers, Bezuidenhout sent one Zacharias Prinsloo to Kaffirland in order to learn some tidings of Faber and the Kaffirs. This also was a failure, for on perceiving the opportunity for escape which was thus offered, Prinsloo ran, as soon as he saw it was safe, to a wooded glen where he found thirteen others who also had escaped and, with them, remained in hiding until the trouble was over. After despatching these three messengers, Bezuidenhout's party left the spot near Van Aardt's and, crossing the Fish River, went a short distance into Kaffirland to a place occupied by a Boer named Louw Erasmus. It is not very clear what object was in view in acting thus, unless to be out of reach of the authorities until the assistance which was expected, in consequence of the various missions, arrived. They did not form an encampment at any one place, but moved about, usually remaining near the shelter or cover of trees and bush, and, by sentries, keeping watch at nights. Each man had provided himself with food for four days before assembling at Kruger's. On the day after they left Van Aardt's (*viz.*, Wednesday) two messengers reached them, one, Touchon, from Major Fraser and another, Hermanus Potgieter, from Mr. Van der Graaff. Touchon, a schoolmaster at Barend de Klerk's, had accompanied the party which arrested Prinsloo, and remained at Van Aardt's. By him Major Fraser sent a letter to the people, endeavouring to call them back to a sense of their duty. He told them that he had known many of them as brave men during the wars with the Kaffirs, and that he was anxious to know why they were now in arms against the Government,

CHAP. that, if they had any grievance against Government, they  
 XI. should represent it in a regular manner and not injure their cause by having recourse to improper measures. In answer to this, a message was sent back by Touchon, to the effect that they had no grievance against the Government, but that they wanted the release of Hendrik Prinsloo, who had been unjustly imprisoned and who had done no wrong. On the receipt of this message Major Fraser again sent Touchon to them with the following letter, and also a copy of Prinsloo's letter to Jacobus Kruger:—

“BURGHERS,

“If the case be as you say, and that the complaints delivered in against H. P. be found false, he shall then certainly be released: not, however, without being examined, or the business investigated; and this Investigation should be made by Government and that freely, but not forced by an Armed assembly of disobedient Burghers. I cannot for my part set H. P. at liberty. Should Mr. Landdrost Cuyler possibly come here, and be willing to do anything in this business, it will depend on his pleasure. Send two of your people; choose whom you will, to hear my last endeavours and to understand my final Resolution.

“G. S. FRASER.

“*November 15th, 1815.*”

To this the following answer was sent:—

“HONOURABLE MR. FRASER,

“We understood your meaning from your letter respecting the Prisoner. But our request is that the prisoner shall not be sent one footstep further from the Post where he is now for four days, when we shall further agree, in presence of the Landdrost of Cradock, which we in general expect; we hope that you will not necessitate us to anything else.

“YOUR SERVANTS.”

This insolent message did not, most certainly, convey the sentiments of the majority of “Your Servants,” for when Touchon read to them the copy of Prinsloo's letter to Jacobus Kruger, which then for the first time became known to them,

the horror of the situation suddenly dawned upon them. The trap into which they had been led by Bezuidenhout and his accomplices was but too apparent. Instead of finding themselves doing their duty in response to the call of the properly constituted authorities, as was their intention, they saw themselves in apparent rebellion against the Government, which they had left their homes to support. They found themselves so far implicated, unintentionally, in these unlawful designs as to render the establishment of their innocence a matter of great difficulty. Many were of opinion that it was an "ugly" letter and would bring them into great misfortune, and wished, there and then, to return to their homes and have nothing further to do with these matters. Bezuidenhout told them that they were at liberty to do so, but as the Kaffirs were expected the next day, those who did would be killed "ten and ten at a time". He endeavoured to raise their drooping spirits by assuring them that he dared say that Prinsloo did not write the letter. For all this, however, they continued to discuss the situation and became more dejected and miserable. The herbalist and coffin-maker gave it, as his opinion that the man who wrote that letter had burnt his fingers and need not go to him to be cured. He did not concern himself with any rebellions except those in the belly.

The message from Mr. Van der Graaff, which was brought by H. Potgieter, was to the effect, that he considered the misconduct, of which they were then guilty, arose out of the mistaken notion that no justice would be done to them when they were really in the right; he urged them to return to their duty until answers had been received from Government to such representations as they thought necessary to communicate. "I represent these matters to you only in consideration of the dreadful misfortunes into which you are about to plunge your wives and children." After delivering the letter, Potgieter tried to speak privately with Kruger, but Theunis de Klerk prevented it. The following answer was sent to Mr. Van der Graaff. It is not clear by whose instigation it was written, but it indicates that the voice of the people had commenced to prevail over the evil spirit which was working among them.



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"SIR,

"Your letter brought by Hermanus Potgieter, we have received and we thank you heartily for your paternal care, we also perceive that we have been painted to you in very black colours by bad tongues, for it is unknown to us that such a letter as that from Hendrik Prinsloo which has been here read, was ever carried round. We request that he may be set at liberty, and as his accusers are here present, we shall therefore bring him ourselves to answer for himself. In the name of all."

By this time all the authorities were well on the move. Mr. Stockenstrom, on hearing of these proceedings, sent a letter to Bezuidenhout's people and then left Graaff Reinet for Cradock, where he called out more armed burghers and stationed some in that village. He then rode into the Tarka with the object of interviewing the leaders, but as he did not find them, he returned to Cradock. Major Fraser, not knowing how feeble the apparently hostile force really was, or how little sympathy the Boers, as a whole, were showing towards the movement, urged Landdrost Cuyler to send further assistance. In response to this, Cuyler collected some burghers from the Uitenhage district and led them in person to Van Aardt's, where he arrived on Thursday evening.

Before daybreak the next morning, the 17th, he wrote a letter to the people, advising them to lay down their arms and asking them to send two of their number to him to explain the reason of their discontent and action. The letter was sent by Touchon, who travelled about nearly the whole of that day in finding them, as they had wandered some distance from the place where he met them before. Groot Willem Prinsloo had joined them in the meantime, having been sent for by Kruger in order to influence Bezuidenhout to abandon the headlong course to ruin on which he had embarked. Kruger and W. Prinsloo welcomed Cuyler's letter, and with them nearly all the others seemed distressed and anxious to see the end of these doings. These two were disposed to act upon the invitation and to seek for pardon. Early the next morning, the eventful Saturday, W. Prinsloo and J. M. Kloppe, as delegates, arrived at Van Aardt's and sought Landdrost Cuyler.

They told him that the people were willing to disperse if they could be assured that they and their children would not be punished for what had happened. Cuyler replied that he could not and would not make any agreement with them so long as they were in arms against their Government, that the delegates should inform the people that they must first surrender at mercy, when only terms could be made with them, otherwise they should be compelled thereto. With this message the two delegates returned. Colonel Cuyler was alive to the danger which might be expected in prolonging negotiations of this character, for, as other military posts had been weakened to support Van Aardt's, he feared the Kaffirs might come to know of it and turn it to advantage. Shortly after the delegates left, therefore, he commenced preparations for following up the people and compelling them, by force if need be, to surrender. About nine o'clock in the morning, a force commanded by Colonel Cuyler and consisting of forty dragoons and thirty armed burghers left Van Aardt's post. Major Fraser, the field-commandant, Nel, and Mr. H. O. Lange, clerk to Colonel Cuyler, also accompanied it. The route must have been over the gently undulating country in the direction of, and at no great distance from, where the railway line is now constructed; and having marched about ten miles they must have passed over the site of the present railway camp at Cookhouse. About four miles farther on some rather high and steep hills rise out of the plain. At one place in these hills there is a depression or break, forming a short valley or "Nek," which is the famous Slagter's Nek. Through it at the present day the main waggon road and railway both pass. In approaching Slagter's Nek by the railway from Cookhouse, it is interesting to note that some little distance before reaching it, there is a siding which to-day bears the name of "Kruger's Post". Near it must have been the homestead of poor old W. F. Kruger, who, through no fault of his own, suffered so much in connection with these affairs, and whose name is thus perpetuated. Near that siding too, but nearer to the river, was the military post known as Kruger's Post, the most northern of those established by Lord Charles Somerset. Towards Slagter's Nek, Colonel Cuyler and his force made their way, hoping to meet with Bezuidenhout's people, though

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having no idea where they were to be found. At the same time they were wandering, apparently aimlessly, towards the same place, and when they arrived at the bottom of the hill, probably the one on the right of the "Nek," they descried in the distance an approaching column of dust which betokened the movement of many horsemen. In order to get a better view of what was drawing near to them, they ascended the hill, and then all doubt as to the warlike character of the advancing party was dispelled. Seeing this, Groot Willem Prinsloo sent a Hottentot to Colonel Cuyler to tell him that the Boers did not wish to fight and received as answer that "Neither did he unless obliged to". When the force arrived near the foot of the hill, H. O. Lange, with five others, was ordered to proceed about 500 paces in advance and to call the people to surrender. This was done, but produced no effect; the Boers probably did not hear them. Lange then volunteered, and received Colonel Cuyler's sanction, to go to the top of the hill alone and unarmed and to speak with them, face to face. Prinsloo came forward to meet him, but on Lange declining to deal with any but the leaders, Bezuidenhout, Kruger and two others, Botha and Malan, advanced and all sat down to talk. In the conversation which ensued, Lange told them that Landdrost Cuyler had not come to them in anger but in hopes of learning the reasons for their conduct, and of persuading them to return to their oath and duty. Kruger said they would go down and surrender at mercy if pardon were promised and permission given to them to return to their homes. While this conference was proceeding, a bugle was heard which Lange understood as an order to rejoin the force. This he accordingly did and reported what had so far taken place. Hopeful of accomplishing his ends by these means, Colonel Cuyler sent Lange to them again, instructing him to tell them to send down ten of their number among whom were to be some whose names he mentioned. When Lange returned, Theunis de Klerk, Kruger and W. Prinsloo stopped him before he got to where the greater number of the people, about sixty, were assembled and engaged him in further conversation. The landdrost's proposition having been communicated to them, Theunis de Klerk said he would be d——d before he would surrender, for he well knew that he would never be free again.

Lange pointed out to them the misery into which they would plunge their wives and families by a continuation of this obstinacy, and so far persuaded Kruger that, in tears, he said he felt he was guilty and would then go to persuade the others to surrender. Prinsloo joined him in this resolve. Just then, however, the others separated and took up positions along the edge of the mountain, and no one attempting to comply with the landdrost's request, Lange descended the mountain and rejoined the force.

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About the time when this was taking place, a few men were seen to emerge from a bushy kloof on the side of the mountain and to join those on the top. It was Faber's party, which had just returned from Kaffirland. The information which they brought was, to Bezuidenhout and his accomplices, discouraging in the extreme. Faber, who had remained with Gaika three days, told that chief that the Dutch were ready to rebel and that the time for assistance from the Kaffirs had arrived. Rossouw, Opperman and Stockenstrom were mentioned as officials who were to be killed. In return for their services, the Kaffirs were to be allowed to reoccupy the Zuurveld, while the Boers were to take some lands along the Koonap River. All the cattle of the dislodged military, as well as those of the Boers who would not join in the rebellion, were to become their property, besides quantities of beads and the usual articles prized by these people. Unfortunately for the success of this mission, a Kaffir, who had been visiting the Colony on private business of his own, happened to arrive at Gaika's place while Faber was there and took the news of the arrest of Hendrik Prinsloo. Whether this had any influence with Gaika it is difficult to say; in any case, the chief was not satisfied, and in the end said that it, referring to Faber's statement, might be the truth or it might be lies; in either case if the Boers wanted to fight they might do so; for himself, he had not received any orders from the great king "on the other side," and until he did he would not move. With this refusal Faber returned to the Colony, and found the people at Slagter's Nek. When, on Lange's return, Colonel Cuyler saw that there was little prospect of settling matters amicably, he gave orders for further advance up the slopes of the hill, and, with Major Fraser, Commandant Nel and Dr.

CHAP. Glaeser, the army surgeon, rode at some little distance ahead  
XI. of the others. Having gone forward about fifty paces, four of the Boers were seen hurrying to meet them. A halt was again called, when Kruger, Prinsloo, Louis Fourie and another went up to the officers and further conference took place, but still nothing could be agreed upon. The Boers therefore returned to the top of the hill, while preparations were made below for an attack upon the position. The dragoons were placed in the centre of the line and were supported on the right by a company of mounted burghers under Commandant Nel and on the left by another under the field-cornet, Bekker. In this disposition they approached within 200 paces of the edge of the mountain, when a final attempt was made to bring the people to terms without force. The Boers placed themselves in the form of a crescent, with about two paces between each, and when they saw the attacking force getting nearer, some of them waved their hats and gesticulated to their compatriots below as a signal for separation from the dragoons, in order that none but the military might suffer from their fire. While thus disposed, Jacobus Potgieter, who had many friends among the people, was sent to them by Colonel Cuyler with further messages; he effected nothing however, and, having been embraced and bidden farewell by some, he returned. Orders to advance were again given when the horses galloped up the mountain until the increasing steepness prevented further progress. Bezuidenhout and two others took a sitting posture and presented their guns but did not fire. Lange and Commandant Nel sprang from their horses, ran to the top of the hill and were soon among those on the left flank. There Kruger was with a number of younger men, who wavering in the determination to resist, were easily persuaded to surrender. Kruger, with tears in his eyes, said he felt he was guilty and would in God's name await his equitable punishment. Lange and Commandant Nel with the twenty<sup>1</sup> who surrendered then returned to Colonel Cuyler. When Bezuidenhout, Theunis de Klerk and the others more deeply implicated saw their numbers thus diminished, they realised that their cause was lost, and mounting their horses rode away with the

<sup>1</sup> In the indictment it says eighteen, and does not mention the two brothers Van Dijk.

greatest speed down the Kaffirland side of the mountain. It is worthy of note that during all these proceedings not a shot was fired on either side. As it was near sunset when this dispersion took place and there was no prospect of securing any more of the people, the return march to Van Aardt's was commenced. The captured Boers were at first allowed to mix freely with the others, though the precaution of placing the dragoons in the rear was taken. But when it got darker and, in spite of the above precaution, two, the brothers Van Dijk, escaped, the prisoners were made to travel two and two, with an escort on each side. In this way, the military post was reached during the night. It does not seem to have entered into the minds of those Boers who were in arms, though possibly unintentionally, against the Government, that surrender would be followed by judicial investigation of their conduct; and though many, undoubtedly innocent of any idea of rebellion, felt they had unwittingly done wrong, yet they seemed to expect to have been allowed to depart to their homes as soon as they had given themselves up. Those who were being marched to Van Aardt's realised their mistake with painful suddenness when they were ordered to march in twos and were escorted as ordinary prisoners. The remarks and conversation which ensued indicated that they considered they had been betrayed and induced to surrender under false pretences, in fact, some of them told Lange so and said that their blood would be upon him.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This point is of importance in view of the Slagter's Nek traditions which are extant at the present day, and illustrates how little worthy of credence some of these traditions are. It is said that it was the field-commandant, Nel, and not Lange, who, under false pretences, induced these people to surrender, and partly on this account, Nel is to-day spoken of among the Dutch people as "The Traitor". There is no evidence as to what actually passed between Nel and Lange on the one side and the Boers who surrendered to them on the other. Tradition has it, that Nel told them that if they surrendered they should suffer no harm. "But can you assure us of that?" they asked. "Yes," said Nel, "I promise as truly as the wine in the Lord's Supper signifies the blood of Christ and the bread His flesh, as truly, I say, you will suffer no harm." ("Mar verseker jy ons dit — Ja, ek verseker julle dit; so waar as di wyn in di Avondmaal Christus bloed en di brood syn vlees beteken, so waar sal julle niks o'erkom ni.") Even supposing Nel did make this statement, it proved eventually to be true, for beyond the not very close imprisonment which they suffered while waiting some

\* *Vide* the article in *Di Afrikaanse Patriot* for 1893, called "Di treurspel van Slagtersnek".

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These prisoners were kept at Van Aardt's post during that night and on the following day, Sunday, Colonel Cuyler held a preliminary examination. Two of them, namely, Joachim Prinsloo and J. E. Botha, were liberated in order that they might assist in searching for the others. The remaining sixteen, together with Hendrik Prinsloo, were sent under a strong guard to Uitenhage to await their trial. Some of those who escaped from the Slagter's Nek Mountain went to Cradock and surrendered to Mr. Van der Graaff; these also were sent to Uitenhage. All the others, with the exception of the few leaders, do not seem to have attempted to flee from justice, but returned quietly to their homes. As, however, this peaceable behaviour was unknown to Colonel Cuyler and his officers, and as only eighteen out of about sixty of those on the mountain were in their hands, immediate and, as it eventually appeared, unnecessarily strong measures were adopted to pursue and capture the others. In the first instance, Mr. Stockenstrom and Captain Harding with fifty men of the Cape Regiment rode into the Tarka as a likely rendezvous of the malcontents, but did not meet with any of them. The woody regions of the Baviaan's River were then considered to be a probable retreat; so to those parts, on Friday afternoon, November 24th, a force consisting of a hundred of the Cape Regiment under Major Fraser, and twenty-two armed burghers under Commandant Nel, marched from Van Aardt's post. Arriving at the Baviaan's River, it was learnt that Bezuidenhout and Faber were somewhere in the woody fastnesses of that district. In order to obtain some information of their movements, Major Fraser and Commandant Nel went up to the lonely homestead of Piet Rasmus Erasmus, one of those who had been at Slagter's Nek and had not surrendered, but who, apart from this, was known to be an upright and law-abiding man. His wife, on seeing the armed party, was very frightened and, when asked for her husband, professed to know nothing of his whereabouts. But on being assured, that if he rendered the services which were required of him he would increase his chance of escaping the punishment he had already incurred, she succeeded in bringing

days for their trial, excepting two, they received no punishment whatever. If there is nothing worse than this against Nel, great injustice has been done to his memory during these many years.

him forward. Erasmus was sent in search of Bezuidenhout and his companions. He returned the following day, when, having seen the "spoor" of their waggons, he reported on the direction they had taken. The approach of the commando was seen by two of those whose captures were desired, namely, Andries Meyer and Abraham Carel Bothma. These two, together with Stephanus Bothma, according to their own account, were in those distant parts not with the intention of eluding pursuit, but in consequence of the drought. They were trekking with their families and cattle to the place of Zacharias de Beer, where the pasture was better than on their own places, and while on this journey they were met by Bezuidenhout who compelled them to follow him. It should perhaps be borne in mind that all these statements concerning the compulsion exercised by Bezuidenhout, were made at the trials which took place after his death and might, in all probability, have been modified had his version been heard. As soon as Meyer saw the commando, he went up to Major Fraser and surrendered, while A. C. Bothma remained in hiding until he was arrested by some of the soldiers. From these men it was learnt that Bezuidenhout and Faber with their families had been seen that morning on the Winterberg. At daybreak the next morning, November 29th, the force moved on towards that mountain and about ten o'clock arrived at a pass through which was the only track that a waggon could travel. The rugged nature of this pass with its bush and huge rocks offered plenty of cover for an attacking force and was eminently adapted for the purpose then in view. Commandant Nel, with a sergeant and eighteen men, went some distance up the glen and disposed themselves so as to prevent retreat, while Lieutenant MacInnes, who had to take the command in consequence of Major Fraser having fallen from his horse and broken his arm while arranging his men, and Lieutenant MacKay with a patrol took a position lower down. Shortly after midday, Bezuidenhout, Faber and Stephanus Bothma with four waggons, in which were their families, and also with cattle, sheep and horses, unsuspectingly entered the ambuscade and, as if to render their capture easier, outspanned the oxen. Faber, on horseback, and Bothma, on foot, then proceeded towards the place where Lieutenant MacInnes and



CHAP. XI. his men were hiding. Having approached them to within thirty or forty paces, the soldiers were ordered to stand up and show themselves. The two men instantly retreated and were called upon to stop, but refusing, the soldiers fired five or six shots at them. Faber dismounted and turning towards the soldiers, kneeled down and took careful aim at them, but while doing so he was fired at again and hit in the left shoulder. Being thus disabled, he was easily captured. Bothma fled up among the rocks and stones which formed one side of the pass and hid in a kind of cave. He was, however, immediately followed by a bugler, to whom he surrendered. When Faber and Bothma, who were in search of water, were taken by surprise, they were out of sight of the waggons. Bezuidenhout had remained behind and, on hearing the firing which led to Faber's capture, he, on horseback and accompanied by his wife, on foot, proceeded cautiously up the glen. When they had advanced about a hundred paces, they caught sight of some of the investing force and then discovered that they were entrapped. They therefore returned to their waggon. The different portions of the detachment then came from their various hiding-places and drew up at about sixty paces from Bezuidenhout's waggon. In the four waggons there were the wives and families of Bezuidenhout, Faber and the two Bothmas, all of whom, except those of the first named, left their waggons and surrendered to Commandant Nel on his calling to them.

Spurning all peaceful overtures and, as though conscious that the previous six weeks had shut him off for ever from loyal, law-abiding citizenship, Bezuidenhout faced his pursuers. Like some indomitable tiger, whose ferocity had cowed the dwellers in the jungle and whose escape the hunters had at last cut off, he turned and stood at bay. The same inflexible will which had imposed his purposes upon his misguided associates now hardened his heart against surrender, and he prepared to sell his life as dearly as he could. His resolution communicated itself to his wife and small son, who alone of all his party stood by him in the final scene, and in them it showed itself the more heroic as in a service more noble than revenge. Before the 130 armed men had had time to take up their positions in order to bring this scene to a close, Bezui-

denhout fired upon them. His bullet took effect upon one of the soldiers and mortally wounded him. He died about two hours afterwards. The attacking party then opened fire and a general action ensued. Bezuidenhout who had the cover and protection afforded by his waggon, fired as fast as his wife could load the guns and hand them to him. Lieutenant MacInnes, who had not had time to reach his men before the firing commenced, arrived at this stage and ordered the bugler to sound the "cease fire". This order was promptly obeyed, and he placed his hat upon the end of a gun and waved it to Bezuidenhout as a signal that he should surrender. At the same time Nel and P. R. Erasmus, who accompanied the party from Baviaan's River, shouted out to him to the same effect. Bezuidenhout, however, took no notice but continued to fire. There was therefore no course open to the attacking party but to return the fire, and thus the din of battle, increased on Bezuidenhout's side by his wife firing the guns as well as loading them, continued until it was seen that Bezuidenhout himself was lying apparently lifeless upon the ground. One gun had been knocked out of his hands by a bullet while he was taking aim; his wife had given him another, and he was about to fire when another bullet hit him and broke his arm. Scarcely had his wife finished attending to the injured arm when he was struck again, this time in the side. He fell and lay on the ground. While his wife was administering further assistance to him, a bullet hit and wounded her, though not dangerously, and, just about the same time, his son, a boy of fourteen, was struck in the leg and foot. When the firing had ceased, Lieutenants MacInnes and MacKay with a small party approached the waggon. Between the hind wheels they found Bezuidenhout in a semi-conscious condition, lying upon his back and bleeding profusely. He died within an hour. Lieutenant MacKay instantly offered to wash and bind up his wounds and in other ways to render assistance to the three in their wounded and miserable plight, but the wife, true to the spirit in which her husband had acted throughout, refused to receive any such assistance. The waggon was searched and in it were found ten guns, a bag of bullets, three pigs of lead, and between thirty and forty pounds of gunpowder. Having secured all this and having inspanned all

CHAP. the waggons and collected the stock, the commando, with the  
XI. prisoners and the two dead bodies, commenced the return march to Van Aardt's. The soldier was buried at a place called Klip Kraal, while Bezuidenhout was taken farther and buried on the farm of a Boer named Louw Bothma. On December 4th all returned to Van Aardt's.

While the later developments of all this commotion were in progress, the ordinary Court of Circuit, consisting of Messrs. F. R. Bressler and W. D. Jennings, was exercising its functions in the Eastern districts, and consequently was on the spot when the greater number of the Slagter's Nek people were captured and awaiting trial. Having fulfilled, on November 16th, the duties with which they were entrusted by their warrant, bearing date of the previous August 7th, they delayed their further onward journey to George, expecting some special instructions from the governor respecting these affairs. In the meantime, therefore, they commenced a preliminary examination of those individuals who were then in prison. In order, however, that the public service should not suffer by the delay which the full investigation of these matters would cause, the above-mentioned gentlemen were instructed to proceed on the usual circuit, and, on November 27th, a special commission, consisting of Messrs. P. Diemal and W. Hiddingh as judges and Mr. G. Beelaerts von Blokland as secretary, were authorised by Lord Charles Somerset to proceed to Uitenhage and "to take cognizance of, try and pass judgment upon the prisoners, who shall be brought before them, charged with offences connected with the late dangerous and unnatural insurrection". They arrived in Uitenhage on December 14th and opened their court on the 16th. Colonel Cuyler was appointed to act as R. O. Prosecutor. The work of the Special Commission lasted nearly six weeks, terminating on January 22nd, 1816. The evidence taken on oath during that time is the basis of the account of these affairs given in this chapter. There were forty-seven persons whose conduct it was considered necessary to investigate, but the charges against some were evidently upon such slight foundations of guilt, that they were considerably referred to in the legal proceedings as "defendant" rather than as "accused". It was quite obvious in the early stages of the trials that some had

*bona fide* joined the people by the order of the field-cornet and had separated themselves as soon as they saw the real nature of the proceedings, while others had been prevailed upon by deceit and compulsion. These were therefore liberated from prison, but forbidden to leave Uitenhage until the whole investigation was completed. Stephanus Bothma, the scribe and amanuensis, managed to escape from prison during the trials and fled to the farther side of the Fish River, but a patrol from Van Aardt's was soon upon his track and succeeded in recapturing him.<sup>1</sup> The whole hearing of the various cases having been completed, the following sentences were passed: H. F. Prinsloo, S. C. Bothma, Theunis de Klerk, A. C. Bothma, Cornelius Faber and W. F. Kruger to be hanged. The bodies of the first five to be buried under the gallows, while Kruger's body might be placed in a coffin and removed by his friends. Frans Marais to be made fast to the gallows with a rope round his neck while the others were executed and then to be banished from the Colony for life. A. Engelbrecht and A. Meyer to be banished for seven years, and A. H. Klopper for five. N. B. Prinsloo and David Malan hard labour for three years on Robben Island and then forbidden to return to the Eastern districts. The following for one year: H. P. Klopper, J. B. Bronkhorst, T. A. Dreyer, P. L. Erasmus, H. A. G. van der Nest, P. W. Prinsloo. Martha Faber to remove with her family more into the Colony. A. van Dyk, W. J. Prinsloo, C. van der Nest, P. R. Botha, C. R. Botha, A. L. Botha, P. J. Delport, J. M. Klopper, J. T. Muller to be fined Rds. 200 or four months' imprisonment at Uitenhage; H. J. Liebenberg, J. F. Botha, J. J. Prinsloo, fined Rds. 100 or two months' imprisonment, and W. A. Nel, A. Labuscagne and L. Labuscagne, Barend de Lange (obviously not the haemraad), F. van Dyk, G. C. Bezuidenhout, Klaas Prinsloo, Rds. 50 or one month—the condemned in each case to pay

<sup>1</sup> This man's talent for writing, which was his undoing in connection with "Slaughter's Nek," had brought him into trouble some years earlier. Having to settle a vendue bill in Graaff Reinet in 1798, he tendered as part payment a butcher's bill bearing date March 28th, 1798, and subscribed with the name of Jacob Hamel, which signature Bothma himself had forged. For this he had to appear before the Court of Justice on March 28th, 1800, and was condemned to be taken to the usual place of execution and exposed to public view with a paper bearing the word "Forger" and then to be banished for five years.

CHAP. the costs. Eight, among whom was P. R. Erasmus, who had  
 XI. rendered good service at the Winterberg, were acquitted. It is worthy of note here that the two judges who pronounced these sentences on these Dutchmen were themselves Dutchmen, and it need hardly be stated that the whole procedure was in accordance with Roman-Dutch law—the law of the Colony. Of those sentenced to death the case of W. F. Kruger seems particularly harsh. He had been tricked into his position by the somewhat cowardly Opperman, and although he had been implicated in the movement from the beginning, there was abundant evidence to show that his actions arose from want of resolution and means to withstand the arts of designing men. In their hands he became an unwilling tool, without the least intention of taking any part in a rebellion. As soon as the above sentence was passed upon him, Colonel Cuyler immediately wrote to the governor and interceded on his behalf. He said: "From my former knowledge of this unfortunate man, who faithfully discharged the toilsome duties of the late Caffre Commando, and who was formerly one of my people, which affords me the opportunity of knowing his character, which was that of a good and mild man, but of that easy temper, too liable to be influenced by designing men. I hope Your Excellency will be pleased to pardon my intercession for mercy in his behalf."

When the sentences of the Dutch judges came before the English governor for his *fiat*, they were, in many cases, very considerably modified in favour of the condemned. Kruger's sentence of death was, in the first place, commuted to transportation for life, and this on further intercession of Colonel Cuyler was reduced to the prohibition to live in the districts of George, Uitenhage or Graaff Reinet, and finally he was fully pardoned.<sup>1</sup> The banishment of A. Engelbrecht and A. Meyer and the imprisonments of N. B. Prinsloo, D. Malan and P. W. Prinsloo on Robben Island were changed to the above-mentioned prohibition. The following: A. H. Klopper, H. P. Klopper, J. Bronkhorst, T. A. Dreyer, P. L. Erasmus, H. A. G. van der Nest, W. J. Prinsloo, J. Prinsloo, C. van der Nest, P. R. Botha, J. M. Klopper, J. F. Botha, J. J. Prinsloo, W. A. Nel, J. F. van Dyk and Klaas Prinsloo were to witness the

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* Letter of Cuyler to G. Beelaerts von Blokland, May 5th, 1816.

execution, though not to be exposed in a disgracing manner, and then to be remitted all further punishment.

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Whatever hopes had been entertained with respect to the mitigation of the sentences of death upon the five were banished when the governor's *fiat* was made public. The extreme penalty of the law was to be carried out. It was the awful scene which accompanied the execution that has given to "Slagter's Nek" its special significance and has caused it to live in memory when more important historical events have been forgotten. On the spot in the open and undulating country where Bezuidenhout had compelled Kruger and others to take the oath, a gallows was erected, and at that place on Saturday morning, the 9th of March, a large concourse of people was assembled. There were 300 soldiers, Colonel Cuyler, Landdrost Stockenstrom, the officers from Van Aardt's and all the field-cornets and inhabitants of the adjacent parts who had been ordered to be present. The executioner, who lived at George, had brought the fatal implements of his office. But they must have been inadequate for the present purpose, and to this must be ascribed the terrible result which followed. The rest is best told in the words of Colonel Cuyler in his letter to the Colonial Secretary, dated March 18th, 1816. "The melancholy finish of the transaction was attended with every precaution and effected with the deepest feelings on all present. An occurrence, however, took place which made the scene more horrid and distressing, and no doubt will more impressively mark its example on the minds of those inhabitants who saw it, as well as those who may come to hear of it. On drawing the fall from under the prisoners, four of them fell to the ground in consequence of the rope (notwithstanding a precaution was taken of having it doubled) snapping. They, all four, got up, one attempted to leave the spot and rush towards the place where the Collegie of Landdrost and Heemraden were. They all four spoke, and at this moment some of the spectators ran to me, soliciting pardon, fancying that it was in my power to grant it. I cannot describe the distressed countenances of the inhabitants at this moment who were sentenced to witness the execution. The executioner came with rope for only one. I was consequently put to my shift to get cord but none was to be bought; I was

CHAP. therefore obliged to use some that was in the Government  
XI. store here, which although of sound appearance proved rotten. It will perhaps be of satisfaction to His Excellency to hear the prisoners one and all died fully resigned to their fate. Above three hundred military were present, as were the Landdrost and Deputy Landdrost of Graaff Reinet, and the Rev. Mr. Herold attended the unfortunate people. After he had prayed for them at the place of execution, they requested to sing a hymn jointly with their late companions and friends, and it was done in a most clear voice, and was extremely impressive; after which Steph. Bothma addressed his friends, advising them to be cautious of their behaviour, and to take an example by his unfortunate fate; and I am convinced the example made will have the desired effect of preventing a similar occurrence, and completely show those unfortunate ignorant people that it will at all times be their duty to obey and support their Government."

About three months after this, those who had escaped to the woods and mountains during the earlier stages, among whom were the unwilling accomplices Zach. Prinsloo and Volkert Delpont, came from their hiding and surrendered themselves. They were sent to Cape Town for trial and after a short examination were pardoned. These, and others who were set free from further punishment beyond having to leave the Eastern districts, seem to have migrated in the direction of the northern parts of the then district of Tulbagh. There was one who had, apparently, taken no part in all this and against whom no charge could be brought, but whom, on account of his former record, Lord Charles Somerset thought it prudent to remove from the East. This was old Martinus Prinsloo, the father of Hendrik. His farm, or rather loan place, was Naude's River adjoining the Somerset Farm. Orders were given for its resumption and for the valuation of the opstal and improvements. This was done and Martinus Prinsloo was awarded Rds. 3,000 as compensation, so no injustice was done to him. It was first decided to establish a military post there, and to that end some buildings were constructed and a company of the 83rd Regiment was, for a time, stationed there. Colonel Cuyler further recommended that a civil magistrate should be established either at that

place or somewhere in the district of Brintjes Hooghte, which should then become a full drostdy, and that Grahamstown should then be a deputy drostdy, subordinate to and under the jurisdiction of Brintjes Hooghte!

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Such then is the account of the Slagter's Nek rebellion as pieced together from the evidence of seventy-five witnesses who were examined on oath at the trials,<sup>1</sup> and from such it seems fair to assume that the truth of what actually happened may be derived. It will be interesting now, in the light of this, to consider some of the traditions in connection with this affair which are extant at the present day.

Perhaps the most inexplicable and curious is that which is associated with the memory of the field-commandant, Nel, or "The Traitor" as he is always called. It is said that he witnessed the hanging of the five men and deliberately kept in his pocket a reprieve which, in an official manner, had come into his possession; and further, that, in consequence of having withheld it, his conscience so tormented him that he committed suicide within three months. Apart from the improbability of this story, there is no documentary evidence to show that a reprieve was ever granted to any but Kruger. The governor's *fiat* on the sentences of death passed by the judges says: "that the 6th Prisoner, Willem Frederick Kruger, shall be transported for life". Not only this, had such an important document as this been transmitted to the East, it is not likely that it would have been sent to a subordinate field-commandant while the highest officials on the frontier, namely, Colonel Cuyler and Landdrost Stockenstrom, were upon the spot. In the article "Di Treurspel van Slagtersnek," published in *Di Afrikaanse Patriot* in 1893, written at the dictation of one De Klerk, who lived at the time of the affair, and which, in part, purports to be a detailed account of the hanging, no mention is made of this withholding a reprieve. Whatever may have been the reasons for the ill-feeling against Nel, there can be little doubt but that he was innocent of the above charge. In the article

<sup>1</sup>The matter contained in the original documents has been inaccessible until a few years ago (1902), when Mr. Leibbrandt of the Archives Department discovered the missing papers in the Master's Office in Cape Town and, at the instigation of the Government, published them in book form. See *The Rebellion of 1815, Generally Known as Slagter's Nek*, edited by H. C. V. Leibbrandt, Cape Town, 1902.



CHAP. referred to, Nel is accredited with having taken the principal  
XI. part in conducting the execution. He is described as holding a staff of office and with it indicating that those whose ropes had broken and who implored him for pardon should again go to the scaffold. Cuyler tells us in his despatch (see p. 363) that it was to himself the unfortunate people thus appealed. The odium which has been heaped upon Nel cannot have been on account of the really small part he played in all these affairs. Had tradition selected Stephanus van Wyk for this honour, it would have been far less surprising, for he opposed and thwarted the leaders from the beginning. In accounting for Hendrik Prinsloo becoming involved in these affairs, it is said that when F. C. Bezuidenhout was shot, the Hottentot Gezwind (official documents say Hans) was captured, and that Prinsloo was ordered to conduct him as a prisoner to Graaff Reinet; that Prinsloo, feeling himself insulted by such an order, refused to comply, and then determined to collect people for the purpose of opposing the Government. The party which went to Gaika is said to have consisted of Faber, Fred (?) Bezuidenhout and the two Bothmas. These statements, made nearly eighty years after the events happened, when compared with those taken down in writing at the time, show the utmost caution which must be exercised in placing any reliance on Slagter's Nek traditions.

Traditional accounts, further, do not agree as to what actually happened at the execution. One (the article above referred to) says all five ropes broke, another says the beam broke and that a new one had to be found. Colonel Cuyler says (see his letter, p. 363) that four ropes broke, and makes no mention of the beam breaking. The only evidence for the last statement at the present time is that some persons in the Baviaan's River district say they have seen splinters of the first beam. The second beam is said to be now in a small farmhouse which may be seen at a short distance from the railway line, on the right, shortly before reaching Longhope Siding (approaching Cookhouse from Alicedale). This beam is about two and a half inches thick, nine inches wide and about twelve or fourteen feet long,<sup>1</sup> and forms part of the ceiling of the

<sup>1</sup> These numbers are from memory as, unfortunately, the paper on which I wrote them at the time of making the measurements, has been lost.—G. E. C.



*Photo C. H. Roberts, Esq*

MONUMENT ON THE GRAVE WHERE THE HANGING TOOK PLACE.

#### INSCRIPTION ON MONUMENT

TER GEDACHTENIS AAN IRLDRICK BE/UIDENHOOT, GESNEUEID TE BAVTAANS  
RIVIER. EN HENDRIK PRINSLOO STEPHANUS BOHMA ABRAHAM C. BOHMA  
CORNELIS FABER. THUNIS DE KIIRK ALHITR GERICH OP 16 MAART 1815,  
INVERBAND MIJ DE SLAGTERS NIK GESCHIEDNIS



*Photo W. White Cooper Esq.*

[See p 356]

THE FLAIS ABOVE GRAHAMSTOWN OVER WHICH THE KAFFIRS APPROACHED  
THE TOWN IN 1819.



front passage of the house. It has not the appearance of a beam which might have been used for the above purpose. The executioner in those days lived at George. When circumstances called him forth to exercise his particular function, he took with him, in his waggon, the woodwork and other necessities for the performance of his duty. It is more than probable, therefore, that the beam actually used was brought from and taken back to George. On the other hand, it is quite certain that he did not provide himself with enough rope and possibly he had not sufficient beam, but made shift with what he could get upon the spot, and, leaving it at the place of execution, it came to be used for the purpose it now serves.

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There is an account of Slagter's Nek which, from the influential character of the writer and the position he held in England in connection with the anti-slavery movement, has commanded much respect and has been received as the most authentic: "An authority mainly relied upon by those who deem it impossible to promote the welfare of the aborigines, without assailing the character of both the colonists and the Colonial Government".<sup>1</sup> The account referred to is that written by Mr. Thomas Pringle in his *Narrative of a Residence in South Africa*, published in 1835. In the main, it is in agreement with the evidence taken at the trials. It is, however, so permeated with anti-colonial prejudice and so coloured to suit party purposes, that it is difficult to regard it as better than an actual falsehood. It is perhaps wise to relegate it to the domain of tradition. What, one would like to ask, is the authority for the statement concerning the drunkenness at the funeral of Bezuidenhout? Why suppress the fact, as he surely must have known it, that the sixty "insurgents" were men who had taken up arms by the command of the proper authority and for a legal purpose? Though Mr. Pringle has written much in connection with South Africa which, regarded purely and simply as writing, is beautiful, the Eastern Province has little for which to thank him.<sup>2</sup> In passing, there is yet another

<sup>1</sup> *Vide* evidence of Col. Wade before Select Committee on Aborigines, Report, p. 407.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Thomas Pringle was one of the 1820 settlers, who after a residence on the frontier of about two years took up literary and scholastic work in Cape Town until 1826, when he finally left the Colony and returned to London. He died in 1834. His knowledge of the frontier Colonists, both Dutch and English,

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account which ought to be noticed, that is the one written by Sir Andries Stockenstrom (*vide Autobiography*, vol 1 p 89) Considering the prominent part that writer took in the actual proceedings, one might have expected that much light would have been thrown upon the matter. It is disappointing to observe, however, that in this account there is, beyond an unimportant personal reminiscence, nothing but what has evidently been *inspired by Pringle*, to whose account Sir Andries refers the reader

Such then is the story of Slagter's Nek and such are the traditions which have gathered around it. The importance which the whole affair has assumed in the mind of the people will perhaps seem to the reader to be strangely exaggerated. Let him, however, reflect that in a country with a brief and in some ways monotonous history, an episode so dramatic in many of its scenes is apt to strike a far deeper impression than it would do in one with a long and varied past. Few, moreover, of the other events which have been recorded in this volume have so wound themselves about the localities at which they occurred as to lend a popular historical interest to those places. With Slagter's Nek it has been otherwise. Each time the Eastern Boer rode past the spot, the tale of those who came out with Bezuidenhout must have been revived in his mind. The appeal which a solitary famous site in the midst of much unhistoric country makes to the imagination, has a sentimental value easier to experience and to instance than to estimate. Thus all the necessary conditions were present for the growth and perpetuation of an imperfect and even mythical tradition, for we may be sure that even of those who in some sense were immediately concerned not all were rightly and fully informed of all the relevant circumstances.

in their most troublous times was therefore not of that extended and direct character which warranted him in posing in England as the authority on the difficult questions concerning the relations between the black and white inhabitants of the East. Associating himself in England with those whose African policy was dictated more by their hearts than their brains, he came, when at a distance of 6,000 miles from native murder and depredation, to hold up to public horror measures which, while he was a settler in the Bavarian's River, with the danger at his own door, he advocated. In 1834 we find him denouncing "commandos" and "the legalised butchery of Bushmen," but in October, 1821, we find him actually organising a commando (*vide* his letter to Capt Harding, dated October 7th, 1821, in which he asks for permission to collect together "to assist us in hunting them out," *Aborigines Report*, p 425).

## CHAPTER XII.

### COMBINED MOVEMENT AGAINST KAFFIR CHIEFS—THE BATTLE OF GRAHAMSTOWN.

WHEN a civilised, or perhaps semi-civilised, people settles down in regions contiguous to those occupied by barbarous and war-like tribes, the predatory instincts of the latter will probably be kept in check only at the muzzles of the guns of the former. Without legislation, wise and efficient, with power to enforce its dictates, there must be continued struggles until the side capable of spilling the most blood becomes the dominant people. Up to the time now under consideration, the Kaffirs had given ample proof that none but the most severe measures were in the least likely to restrain them from pillage and violence towards those who, without the slightest doubt, wished to live near them in peace. Ever on the watch for plunder and prepared at all times to risk almost any danger to obtain it, the security of the white inhabitants was an impossibility without the constant service of a larger garrison along the extended frontier than the Government could sanction. The ineffectual efforts and half-measures which the Kaffirs had so often witnessed, were indications of weakness which were not lost upon their perception and astuteness and of which they were never slow to take advantage. The recapture of the cattle they had stolen, as well perhaps as the capture of their own as penalty, without further punishment of the nature of personal chastisement, was worse than no action at all, for then, as with some wild animal suddenly deprived of its prey, revenge, without fear, led to immediate attack for its recovery. Fraser's commando of 1818, though the best under the circumstances had been done, was of such a nature. Kaffirland was entered by a retaliatory expedition, cattle were brought out, and, for fear of doing any injustice, no punishment was inflicted. This, as usual, led to the Kaffirs taking immediate steps for revenge. At this time matters were further complicated, and further sources of turmoil tapped, by the interference of the Colonial

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CHAP. Government, though undoubtedly necessary, in the politics of  
XII. the tribes. Although Gaika was, according to Kaffir custom, the paramount chief over the tribes west of the Kei, yet the pre-eminence which had been conferred upon him by the governor in 1817, created a jealousy among the other chiefs and an antagonism which, very shortly, brought their vengeance upon him. Gaika, by his partial alliance with the white man and his promise to discourage practices which were so consonant to the Kaffir disposition, greatly enhanced the influence of his hostile uncle Ndhlabi, who, disapproving of this increase of authority from without, well expressed his sentiments in this connection by his question, "Shall I be subject to the boy whom I nursed?" It is not surprising, therefore, that machinations were soon developing against the nephew. Powerful as Ndhlabi was and little needing further encouragement to show defiance to the authority set over him, he was yet aided and abetted by an extraordinary individual who for some time previously had been working his way to influence among all the tribes. This was a man of low birth, that is, not belonging to any of the "royal" lines, named Makanna.<sup>1</sup> This personage apparently began his public life as a witch-doctor and prophet, and was more than usually fortunate in his circumstances, to which, no less than to his peculiar abilities, his influence with the tribal chieftains was due. For among a people equally remarkable for their ignorance and their credulity, imposture, such as that practised by Makanna, has more than ordinary scope. His semi-mystical utterances fascinated his countrymen and the measure of success which he achieved confirmed them in their confidence in his power: while the credit which he thus ac-

<sup>1</sup> In the official documents he is always referred to as "Lynx". The explanation of this is that among the Kaffirs, besides Makanna, he was known also by the name of Nxele or Inxele, the left-handed, the Dutch equivalent of which is "Linksch". By a not too careful consideration of the meaning of the word, the English, guided only by its sound, turned it into "Lynx," in the same way as the difficultly pronounceable word Ngqika was Anglicised to Gaika and Nqeno to Eno. An interesting case of the reverse, *viz.*, of Kaffirised English is the Kaffir word for cannon or big gun. "When the first cannon was being landed in Natal, the natives who were bringing it on shore asked the Englishman who was superintending the operation what its name was; he replied, 'You will see *by-and-by*,' wishing to keep them close at their work. Not understanding the sentence properly, they called out 'Mbai-mbai,' concluding that that was its name, and since that time a cannon has been thus called" (*Kaffir-English Dictionary*, by the Rev. W. J. Davis, ed. 1872).







114 1 10 Km. W R

DIR NUT WHITE M. BATH OF AMARINDI 100X 11 AG  
(1 thousand in the distance)

quired stimulated and increased his natural self-assurance until his enthusiasm and high pretensions passed far beyond the bounds of reason. Every fresh step he took in his perilous ascent to power being seconded by a complementary measure of popular support, his claims and their circumstances, thus conspiring together, rendered his influence paramount with the *de facto* rulers of his nation. Sharing in the general hostile feeling against Gaika, he increased, with this influence, the balance of Ndhlabi's power. This sense of strength and the advantage it conferred, apart from the inveterate hatred between Ndhlabi and Gaika, was more than sufficient to determine the Amandhlambi and their allies to visit their displeasure upon the offending Gaika and to set at defiance the superiority he assumed over them.<sup>1</sup> Gaika, suspecting that some trouble of this nature was brewing, applied to the nearest military post for protection. Before the governor's instructions could be received, Ndhlabi, throwing down the gauntlet, as it were, sent a party to seize the cattle of one of Gaika's subordinate chiefs, hoping thereby to draw Gaika himself into ambush. The seizure of a sub-chief's cattle was an insult which the whole tribe felt called upon to avenge. The *amapakati* or councillors therefore met and advised retaliation upon the invaders. One councillor, however, an old and sick man named Ntsikana, who was, though in a lesser degree, among the Amangqika what Makanna was among the Amandhlambi, strongly urged Gaika against crossing the Keiskamma and foretold the disaster which eventually happened. The thirst for revenge overcame this wise advice and Gaika with all the warriors marched from the Tyumie Valley and, passing over the district where Middle Drift now stands, arrived on the slightly undulating country near Debe Nek, not far from the base of the peculiarly shaped mountain called Intaba-Ka-Indoda (Tabandoda), where the enemy was seen prepared for an attack. It was not until the fight commenced, however, that the Gaikas discovered that the force with which they had to contend was greater than that which at first appeared. The larger portion of the Amandhlambi army was concealed and was rendered even more formidable by a reinforcement of the Amangcaleka, or people of Hintsa, who also was at that time on unfriendly terms

<sup>1</sup> *Vide Records*, vol. xii., p. 196.

CHAP. with Gaika. The scheming of Makanna and Ndhlabi completely succeeded. The Gaikas were drawn into the open country and, caught by the overwhelming numbers which were lying in wait for them, were slaughtered in hundreds. The contest, which was the most furious and bloody in Kaffir history, lasted until near sunset, when the Gaikas, finding further resistance impossible, retreated. They were pursued and further punished until darkness mercifully put an end to the carnage. Ndhlabi followed up this advantage by raiding Gaika's district, burning his huts and kraals and capturing large droves of cattle. Gaika himself fled and took refuge near the Great Winterberg Mountain, whence he sent to Major Fraser in Grahamstown an account of what had happened, and appealed for the assistance which had been assured him by the Colonial Government in the event of his needing it, as he then did. Although this quarrel between the rival chiefs was one in which the Colony was not directly concerned, yet, indirectly, it arose out of, or was fomented by, the result of the conference at the Kat River in 1817. The policy of the Colonial Government was to abstain from interference in the disputes which might arise among the Kaffirs themselves, and to leave them to settle their differences in any manner they chose. In the present instance, however, considerations of far greater moment than those of merely enabling one chief to obtain redress or revenge against another, were involved. Gaika, who had been invested with a measure of British authority and acted, as it were, as a representative of the Government, was ignominiously driven by the avowed enemy of the Colony to take refuge in the wilds. He had been promised protection and support in the event of such a contingency, and now he trusted to the honour and integrity of the British name to see that promise fulfilled. But, further, besides the vindication of British authority, the safety, nay, even the very existence of the Eastern Province depended upon prompt action in reinstating Gaika and assisting him to regain his, perhaps only nominal, supremacy. The prestige which this victory gave to Ndhlabi, already the greatest chief and warrior on the border, would soon have attached to him all Gaika's remaining adherents, and thus, with the feeble military force which was then available, the union among the Kaffirs would have led to disaster in the Colony,

compared with which, all former irruptions would have been insignificant. Acting upon such views as these, Lord Charles Somerset determined to listen to Gaika's complaint and to sanction steps for the punishment of Ndhlabi. At this juncture, Major Fraser, who had already served twenty-four years, thirteen of which were in the Colony, sought permission to retire from further duty and to return to England. Although his request was complied with, he did not avail himself of it, but remained and took part in the stirring events yet to be recorded. He was relieved, however, of the command of the frontier forces and in his place Lieutenant-Colonel Brereton was appointed.

While Gaika was a refugee in the Winterberg, his fortunes were further broken by the loss of the missionary Williams. In August, 1818, that missionary died of a fever at the station he had established at the Kat River, leaving a wife and two small children to the protection of the barbarous people by whom they were surrounded. Mr. Williams deserves more than a passing notice. Although Lord Charles Somerset speaks of him as "timid and illiterate,"<sup>1</sup> he was the first white man to venture to live entirely, with his wife and family, among a people whom the Colonists had so many good reasons for regarding with fear and horror. Simple-minded and with no other end to serve than the moral and religious elevation of the Kaffir, no schemes or prospects of political and worldly advancement and profit to which his missionary work was important as a mere stepping stone, he laboured quietly during nearly two years and gained the complete confidence of not only Gaika, but all the Kaffirs with whom he came in contact. Fortunate would it have been for South Africa had there been more missionaries of the stamp of Williams than there have been among the large numbers of "missionaries to the poor heathen," which have flocked to these shores. When circumstances rendered it safe for Gaika to return to his own district, almost his first public act was to send a message to the governor asking that, in consequence of Mr. Williams's death, another missionary might be sent to him. Lord Charles Somerset, impressed with the expediency of having some dis-

<sup>1</sup> See letter to Rev. John Brownles, December 30th, 1818, *Records*, vol. xii., p. 118.

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creet person living in Kaffirland, who might act as official intermediary between the Government and the Kaffir tribes, as well as of promoting Christianity and civilisation among them, welcomed Gaika's request. Fortunately, a gentleman eminently fitted for this responsible and delicate position was at hand. The Rev. John Brownlee had arrived in the Colony in 1817, having been sent out by the London Missionary Society. He soon broke his connection with that society, however, and acted as an independent minister under the Colonial Government. He was a man of good education and sound judgment, and, in consequence of his secession, being unaccountable to superiors far distant, who were ignorant of the relations existing between the Colonists and their turbulent neighbours, he was well qualified for the peculiar position in which the governor proposed to place him. After acknowledging that Mr. Brownlee's first duty was the propagation of religious instruction among the heathen, His Excellency desired that he should continually impress upon the chiefs the constant wish of the Government to maintain friendly relations with them, "that you should explain to them his wish that the Border, now fixed for the two nations, should not be violated by either; that on his part he is prepared to punish any Colonist who shall commit the most trifling offence against the Caffer people, and that it is but just in return that the Caffer chiefs should, on their part, seek out and punish those who commit depredations and murders in our territory. His Excellency is anxious to establish such intercourse between the Caffer people and the Colonists as shall be mutually beneficial, and for this end he is desirous of obtaining correct statements as to their wants and also as to the objects which they may be able to bring to Graham's Town for barter." Information was to be collected on all matters relating to the country and people, correspondence to be maintained with the frontier magistrates, and generally he was to act in such a manner as to introduce law, order and civilisation. For these services Mr. Brownlee was to receive Rds. 1,000 per annum, and, in the first instance, to be provided with waggon and oxen and the initial expenses of his establishment. In consequence of the disturbed state of the country, Mr. Brownlee did not take up his duties until the middle of 1820. The behaviour of the ever active Ndhlabi

precluded the possibility of any such peaceable measures, and not until success had attended the endeavours to subjugate him could there be any hope of peace and civilisation flourishing beyond the Fish River. On October 6th, 1818, Lieutenant-Colonel Brereton arrived in Grahamstown to take up his duties both as commandant of the frontier and also to organise a punitive expedition against Ndhambi. The same care and caution characterised the instructions which the governor issued to him as had always been shown on previous occasions, and by former governors. War was to be avoided by treating the Kaffirs collectively as friends, and regarding the grievances, of which the Colonists had good reasons to complain, as the actions of mere individuals, or of petty chiefs at most; the utmost care was to be exercised in entering their country for the purpose of punishing any refractory chief; chastisement was to be confined within the most moderate bounds and not to include the destruction of their plantations or kraals.<sup>1</sup> In short, the worn-out policy of conciliation, the continuation of which through so many years had bred in the Kaffir mind contempt for the power of the Government and a realisation of their own strength, was still to be pursued. Each feeble and unsuccessful attempt to punish such men as Ndhambi and Makanna only aggravated the dangers and misery of the *status quo* and led to still further outrages, as will now be shown.

The small military force on the frontier being little more than adequate for the maintenance of the posts and the protection of the boundary, Colonel Brereton, in order to act at a distance in the enemy's country, had to have recourse, as was usual in such cases, to that cheap yet, under the circumstances, most efficient force, the burgher commando. It is difficult to realise in these days, when no volunteer goes on active service without being paid, the patriotism and self-sacrifice of the early Eastern Province Boer when called out on commando. Not only did they receive no pay or remuneration of any kind, no matter how long they suffered the labours and privations of war, but they had to find their own horses and guns, besides, in many cases, supplying themselves at their own cost with provisions, ammunition being the only item in which they were assisted by the Government. Yet

<sup>1</sup> *Records*, vol. xii., p. 38.

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they seem always to have responded readily to the call of duty, and uncomplainingly to have undertaken any toil and danger which had to be encountered. On November 4th, Major Fraser, acting under Colonel Breton's instructions, wrote from Grahamstown to the landdrosts of Graaff Reinet and Uitenhage, ordering them to call out 350 and 230 armed and mounted burghers, respectively, for the purpose of acting against Ndhlabi, Hintsa and such other chiefs as had conspired against Gaika. In reply to this communication Mr Stockenstrom gave some indication of a disposition which, in after years, became very characteristic of him, namely, to cavil at and look with disfavour on measures in the prosecution of which he himself was not called upon to play the most prominent part. In this case he stated in answer to the request for burgher assistance that he had not yet been informed of any determination of Government by which the civil power had been made subservient to the military command, and that to prevent misunderstanding, confusion and disappointment it would be necessary for Colonel Breton to send to him a copy of the document investing him "with any civil authority of which it was forgotten to inform me" <sup>1</sup>. All the same, how-

<sup>1</sup> Vol 208 of Manuscript Letters in Colonial Archives. In this connection it might be stated here that, at this time, there seemed to arise in Mr Stockenstrom's mind a deepening impression of being slighted and treated with injustice by the governor. His ambition in early life was a military career, to the furtherance of which end both Colonel Collins and Earl Caledon had interested themselves. Force of circumstances, however, turned his early steps in another direction, and though he did not relinquish or abandon his first aspiration, yet his peculiar abilities and the necessity for his services in the position in which he was placed detained him longer and longer until he saw the desire of his life recede further and further towards the region of impossibility. His knowledge of the country and its inhabitants, his popularity with the greater number of the Boers by reason of which he was always their chosen leader on commando, his aptitude for official and routine business, all conspired to make him a colonial landdrost rather than a military commander. It is true, he had at that time the rank of lieutenant in the Cape Corps (Hottentots) but the status conferred by this title could hardly be regarded as equal to the same rank in the regular army, though his experience and success in the warfare peculiar to the country well entitled him to it. Lord Charles Somerset in sending Colonel Willshire to the East in February, 1819, and acquainting him with the officials he would find on the frontier, said in reference to Cuyler and Stockenstrom "The Magistrates of both the Frontier Districts are men of Military habits and education, the one (Cuyler) of high rank in the service, the other (Stockenstrom) by his talent and intelligence making amends for the want of professional rank which, when he was removed to the civil service, was no longer an object which he could pursue. Your discretion will improve this hurt." When in 1818, the two sons of Lord Charles Somerset arrived

ever, and without the information he desired, he commenced to comply with Colonel Brereton's request.

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Circular letters were sent to the field-cornets, who immediately visited the different farms, calling upon the men to obey Colonel Brereton's orders. On the day appointed, namely, November 21st, Mr. Stockenstrom rode into Grahamstown at the head of a party of 160 armed burghers. Sixty more, who, in consequence of the poor condition of their horses owing to the prolonged drought, were delayed, followed as quickly as circumstances would permit. A further 180 were in readiness, some of whom were already stationed along a defensive line extending from the Tarka to the junction of the Fish Rivers. When all the burghers from both Graaff Reinet and Uitenhage had assembled in Grahamstown and had been joined by a company of the Hottentot Corps, the whole force moved out of the village about December 1st, and marching to the Fish River, crossed into Kaffirland.

In the meantime Ndhlabi and the chiefs in league with him became acquainted with the proposed movement against them and, moving in an easterly direction, took refuge in the woody fastnesses near the Keiskamma River. As they were followed they abandoned their cattle which thus fell into the hands of their pursuers. In this way the immense number of 23,000 was obtained. The commando was reinforced by Gaika's people, whose thirst for vengeance on those who had brought about the disaster of Debe Nek still raged, and was not satiated by

in the Colony and it became known that they were to receive captancies in the Cape Corps over the heads of those who felt that their services had earned them promotion, ill feeling arose between the governor and the landdrost. Parental concern of the one came into conflict with wounded pride and disappointed hope of the other. "It was soon apparent that the sun of my favour was setting," said Mr. Stockenstrom, who had received a friendly warning that "he was flying too high" and that "his wings were to be clipped" (see *Autobiography*, vol. 1, p. 130). His asperity was not softened by the appearance of Captain Henry Somerset in Grahamstown as acting landdrost and his further promotion to be commandant of the frontier. Though he eventually proved himself to be a most efficient and self-sacrificing defender of the border, Mr. Stockenstrom would never become reconciled to him. "For me to speak kindly of Captain Somerset would be disgusting affectation," he said in writing of this period at a later date (see *Autobiography*, vol. 1, p. 129). The influence of "uncles at the Horse Guards" sat upon Mr. Stockenstrom as a nightmare, and the bitterness and rancour which developed in him during these years seem to have tinged his whole life and when, at a later date, he himself rose to power, to have reacted upon the unfortunate Colony.



CHAP. the retaliation they then found it in their power to inflict.  
XII. "The British commander found it impossible to restrain the savage passions of the Gaikas, who were mad with excitement and joy at being able to take revenge, and were unwilling to show mercy when any of their enemies fell into their hands. He withdrew, therefore, before accomplishing the destruction of Ndhlabi."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Stockenstrom with a small force was detached from the main body in order to operate more to the north for the protection of his own district. On December 9th, he wrote, semi-officially, to the Colonial Secretary from the south side of the Winterberg, lamenting the imperfections of the plan of campaign. He said that all his efforts to obtain news of the whereabouts of the commando had been unsuccessful, that he had a hundred men with him who could have done good service, but could not act as he did not know which Kaffirs to treat as enemies. "Everything is in a deadlike quiet which makes me think that both Kaffirs and the commando keep to the woods by day." "We have taken cattle, it is true, but these will soon be re-taken from the Colony."

Gaika was reinstated on the lands from which he had been driven and allotted 9,000 of the captured cattle. Of the remainder some were given to the farmers as compensation for what had been stolen from them, while the remainder "were sold to defray the expense of the expedition" (Theal). On the whole, this movement was worse than useless, for it was the cause of greater misfortune to the Colony. Not only was Ndhlabi not captured, but no sight even of him was gained. This exhibition of weakness was alone failure, deplorable and inglorious, but worse still the enormous number of cattle taken rendered it absolutely certain that these people, driven to choose between starvation and retaliation, would very soon again invade the Colony and with increasing violence. The bees had been deprived of their honey and angered, and though they may have been proverbially busy in acquiring it, by dishonest means, yet those who have the hardihood to dispute the possession incur the danger of subsequent pain and anguish. Scarcely had the burghers reached their homes after the disbandment of the commando, when the swarm, said to be 18,000 Kaffirs, rallied and, realising their loss, were again on the

<sup>1</sup> Theal, vol. iii., p. 275.





*Photo, R B Blakiston 189*

ENSIGN HUNT'S GRAVE AT KAFFIR DRILL



TYPE OF HOUSE BUILT IN GRAHAMSTOWN IN 1824

*From a contemporary painting in possession of Rev Dr Flint, of Cape Town*

confines of the Fish River. Before the end of the month,<sup>1</sup> depredation and murder once more filled Albany with alarm. On Christmas Day (1818) three farms, those of P. Gousen, senior, P. Gousen, junior, and P. W. Nel, were simultaneously attacked and sixty-one, twenty-five and twenty-two head of cattle, respectively, taken from them. On the 30th, Paul Bester lost thirty-nine, and on January 14th the remaining twenty-nine were taken, whereupon he abandoned his place. During the month of January, 1819, the district of Albany was almost as completely in the possession of the Kaffirs as it was before their expulsion in 1812. On the 11th of that month nearly 200 cattle were taken from different places. At one of them a Hottentot woman and her daughter were left in charge of the sheep; on seeing the approach of the Kaffirs the mother succeeded in escaping to a place of safety, but the robbers caught the daughter, cut her throat and drove off the sheep. On the 29th, sixty-nine head of cattle were taken from the farm of J. Oosthuisen and the Hottentot, who was guarding them, was stabbed to death; also, from the place of Cornelius Meyer, twenty-three horses were taken, and two Hottentots murdered there. From Philip Botha's farm, at Botha's Hill near Grahamstown, 133 cattle were driven off and another Hottentot put to death. An attempt was made to recapture these last by a small party of Hottentot soldiers of the Cape Corps, who followed the spoor to Hermanus Kraal, near the present Fort Brown. There a large body of Kaffirs surrounded them and five of them were pierced to death with assegais. The cattle were not regained. The available military forces were kept incessantly on patrol both day and night, but so daring were the Kaffirs that any such attempt to keep them in check was either ignored or contemned by determined attack. Ensign Hunt of the Royal African Corps lost his life while on this duty. In command of a small party of his men, he left Kaffir Drift post on the evening of January 31st. While passing through a part of the Fish River bush they were suddenly surrounded, and before any attempt could be made to defend themselves Ensign Hunt and one of the privates were killed and three others wounded. Hunt's body was found the next day, naked and frightfully mutilated.

<sup>1</sup> December.

CHAP. XII. lated.<sup>1</sup> Captain Gethin, of the 72nd Regiment, met with a similar fate two days afterwards. On the evening of February 3rd, a report was taken to De Bruin's Drift post that, at a place between that and Wentzel Coetzee's (now Carlisle Bridge) a Hottentot, who was in charge of 136 head of cattle had been murdered and the cattle driven off. Captain Gethin with seven mounted men went immediately in pursuit, while a party of infantry entered the bush in order to recapture the cattle. The captain with his men were some distance ahead, following the course of the Fish River, when, in passing a place where the bush was more extended and thick, a large body of Kaffirs, who apparently saw them coming and were waiting for them, suddenly rushed out and, yelling frantically, surrounded the party. Captain Gethin instantly fired, but had not time to re-load. He struck out vigorously with the butt end of his gun, but very soon fell to the ground pierced with thirty assegai wounds. Two others of the mounted party, Peacock and MacDonald, were also killed. The Kaffirs retained the cattle and took also the horses, arms and ammunition of the murdered men and got clear away. On all sides, during these terrible weeks, they were meeting with the same success. Captain Gethin's body was recovered and buried in Grahamstown, in the military cemetery which was then at the back of the drostdy buildings.<sup>2</sup>

The terror caused by all this threatened another general abandonment of the district of Albany. The farmers with their families were fleeing and collecting together in different

<sup>1</sup> He was buried in the small graveyard near the Post. The grave-stone is there to this day and bears the following inscription:—

"Here lie interred the remains of Edward Hunt of the Royal African Corps, who was killed by the Caffres, near Caffre Drift on the night of the 1st of February, 1819, aged 20 years."

<sup>2</sup> Within recent years this cemetery has been done away with and a few of the more important remains with their grave-stones removed into the present Botanic Gardens. Captain Gethin's grave is one of these. It bears the inscription: "Here lie interred the Remains of Captain Robert Gethin, His Majesty's 72nd Regiment, who, after having by his gallantry, highly distinguished himself in the Army commanded by the Duke of Wellington, was killed by Caffres near De Bruin's Drift on the 3rd of February, 1819, aged 33 years."

"Sleep, valiant hero, sleep in peace.  
I hope thy soul to Heaven hath fled.  
Briton's sons shall scourge the race  
That left thee numbered with the dead."

places for common defence. All the inhabitants of Lower Bushman's River assembled at a temporary post at Rautenbach's Drift, while others formed a strong camp at the Addo. The bush along the Sunday's River as well as the woody fastness of the Zuurberg again resounded with the Kaffir war-cry. Isolated inhabitants sent piteous appeals for help to the nearest authority, but little assistance could be afforded them.

On February 5th, a farmer, J. Meyer, writing to his field-cornet, Fourie, reporting the murder of a soldier at his brother's place and the capture of all the cattle, said: "God alone knows what will become of us. We are all gathered here at my place and don't know how we shall get away. One can have no idea but that the whole of Kaffirland is here. For God's sake please come to our assistance. We shall try to make our escape to-morrow if we are still alive; our lives are not safe from moment to moment."

In the awful state of affairs which was thus created, both the military and civil forces were powerless to do anything to stem or oppose the wave of ruthless destruction which was overtaking them. The former were barely able to maintain their positions in the small distant garrisons, while the latter abandoning their farms, could do no more than assemble at the temporary camps and defend their families. On February 9th, appeals were sent to Cape Town for assistance. Colonel Cuyler, in thus acting, transmitted a long list of the outrages which had been committed and pointed out the possibility of his drostdy being cut off from all communication with the military on the border, as the distance was great and the intervening bush was becoming more and more thickly infested with the invaders. And Colonel Brereton, realising the hopelessness of the situation, despatched Major Fraser to Cape Town in order that the governor might receive a faithful account of the terrible condition of things from an authentic source. Major Fraser rode the whole distance of about 600 miles in a little over six days, arriving in Cape Town on February 16th. On receiving this alarming intelligence Lord Charles Somerset immediately communicated with Colonel (afterwards Sir Thomas) Willshire, who was then in Cape Town, ordering him to repair to the East with the Light Infantry of the 38th Regiment. Just previously to this, Colonel Brereton had asked permission

CHAP. XII. to retire and to return to England on pressing private affairs; this being granted, Colonel Willshire was appointed to relieve him and to become the new commandant of the frontier. Some delay ensued in despatching the troops from Simon's Bay, for in the first place a difference of opinion arose between Captain Hercules Robinson, commander of the *Favourite*, the transport in which the soldiers were to embark, and the governor with regard to the power and authority of the latter to press the vessel into this service.<sup>1</sup> Captain Robinson having at length consented to undertake the duty and commenced the voyage, the *Favourite* was disabled on rounding Cape Agulhas and had to put back to Simon's Town. The troops were re-embarked in the *Alacrity* with Colonel Willshire and Major Fraser and arrived safely in Algoa Bay. The instructions which the governor issued to Colonel Willshire for the guidance of his conduct and rule in the East were similar to those given to Colonel Brereton. The one and only object the Colonial Government had in view was the permanent tranquillity of the border. No enlargement of territory was sought or desired. The most scrupulous care was to be taken in preventing, by prohibition and punishment, any colonist from crossing into Kaffirland, lest by so doing, offence should be given to the natives. In short, the Government desired no communication whatever with the Kaffirs, though a deaf ear would not be turned to such as they chose to make and were of an honest and peaceable character and conduced to their advantage. It is impossible to conceive a fairer line of conduct and one calculated to convince any but determined thieves and murderers that the only desire of the Colonists was to live in peace and friendship with their neighbours. With reference to the immediate duties to be performed by Colonel Willshire, operations were to be commenced against the invaders at the earliest possible date. The punishment of Ndhambi was the object of first importance, as no effective result could be expected from further military action unless a decisive and effectual blow was struck at that wily and powerful chief and his adherents. If he could be taken by surprise and compelled to retire permanently beyond the Keiskamma, so much the better, but there was

<sup>1</sup> *Vide Records*, vol. xii., pp. 139-49.

authority to seize him and, in the case of resistance, to destroy him. From Colonel Brereton's experience and failure, it was evident that the utmost caution and secrecy were necessary in all the preparations. Nothing less than absolute certainty of complete success was to warrant any movement towards Kaffirland. There was to be no risk ; rather than to permit such it was thought more advisable to temporise.

That there might be, on this occasion, no uncertainty on the score of a sufficiently powerful force, the whole Colony was called upon to assist in ridding Albany of the pest which was desolating it. It need hardly be stated that the harassed burghers of Graaff Reinet and Uitenhage were again called out, 400 of the former and 300 of the latter. In addition to these there were 300 from each of Tulbagh and Swellendam, 250 from George, 200 from Stellenbosch and 100 from the Cape,—1,850 mounted burghers in all. Besides this burgher force there were 1,100 Infantry from the 38th and 72nd Regiments and Royal African Corps, 32 Royal Artillery, 155 of the Cape Regiment mounted, and 150 men of that Regiment who had been discharged, having served their time, and 32 of the Colonial Troop, making in all a grand total of 3,352 men. A dark cloud was rising, though perhaps slowly, on Ndhlabi's horizon. He was leading a merry life, but a day of reckoning was not far distant.

Owing to a variety of causes, considerable time, indeed over four months, was spent upon these military preparations. After the drought had broken up, there was a severe epidemic of horse-sickness which carried off hundreds of animals. No less than 220 out of the 300 horses, which were with the Swellendam contingent, died on their way to the frontier. The scarcity of horses was chiefly responsible for the delay in these matters, though even under the most favourable circumstances the extensive scale of the proposed operations, the precautions against failure and the difficulty of provisioning such a force in the East, necessitated considerable time. In the meanwhile the Kaffirs were having their own way in everything. It was clear to them that there were, for a time at least, no means of opposing them. Finding farms abandoned, cattle practically left in their hands, seeing the flight of the white inhabitants before them, they were again virtual masters of the Zuurveld.



CHAP. Encouraged by all this, they increased in daring and proceeded  
XII. to lengths unprecedented in all their former inroads.

As soon as the Uitenhage burghers were assembled, Colonel Cuyler sent a commando into the Zuurberg in order to endeavour to dislodge any Kaffirs who might be in those parts. None were found, but there were unmistakable signs of both Kaffirs and cattle having moved towards Kaffirland. Those parts of Uitenhage, so distant from the boundary, were, however, harbouring large numbers of the enemy and suffering daily from his enterprise. In April, 1819, Enon, about thirty miles north of the village of Uitenhage, was savagely attacked. This place was a newly founded Moravian missionary station, situated near Coerney, on the Witte River, a branch of the Sunday's River. The following is the letter sent to Colonel Cuyler by Mrs. Schmitt, the wife of the missionary who was lying ill at the time :—

“ WITTE RIVER, April 14th, 1819.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ Excuse the hasty way in which I write ; our circumstances compel me to it. We had hoped that the commando who have been here would help us with regard to the Kaffirs ; but, alas ! we have to-day experienced a more severe attack than before. All our cattle are gone and *eight* of our best men murdered, not far from our house on the road to Coerney. We request that you will let us know as soon as possible what we can do. Would we flee we have no oxen : eight guns have the Kaffirs and eight of our best men,—I have just heard *nine*. Do pray send us help as soon as possible. The two men that have escaped tell me the number of the Kaffirs far exceed what was last here. Pray help us ! We find ourselves surrounded with women crying for their husbands and children for their fathers.

“ I remain in haste,

“(Signed) A. SCHMITT.”

Fortunately, when the letter arrived, the Uitenhage commando was in readiness to march. A large portion of this force, with four spans of oxen, was immediately sent off to Enon in order to give safe conduct to the people and to transport their effects into Uitenhage. The whole population of the

mission station, numbering about 150 men, women and children, was thus safely removed from danger. They remained in Uitenhage several months, until, in fact, the mission station could be re-established. Some of the men worked at their trades and earned a scanty livelihood, while by far the greater number of these people had to be rationed on bread and meat at Government expense. No special attempt was made to arrest the murderers of the Enon people or to recapture the cattle. The Kaffirs were so completely masters of the situation that it would have been useless to do otherwise than to hold on and defend life until the preparations for the invasion of Kaffirland were completed. The little opposition which Ndhlabi's hordes met with in driving off the farmers' cattle, and the retreat of the white inhabitants before them, encouraged and stimulated them from daring to daring, until, on the 22nd of that month (April), they attempted a task which, in magnitude and boldness of design, eclipsed all their former hostile adventures. The annihilation of the military, headquarters of the Eastern Province, namely Grahamstown, became the object of their attention and ambition. The action which ensued is remarkable for, at least, three reasons. Firstly, on account of the enormous numbers which were acting in concert; in no other instance have so many Kaffirs at one time concentrated their attentions on one place; secondly, their commencing an attack in broad daylight and in open country, so exceptional to their usual custom in warfare; and thirdly, the awful punishment they received, for, neither before nor since, have so many Kaffirs been killed in so short a time. For these reasons alone, the BATTLE OF GRAHAMSTOWN stands out pre-eminently as a conspicuous landmark in Eastern Province history.

The details of this memorable conflict are as follows. On April 21st a Kaffir arrived in Grahamstown with a defiant message from Makanna to Colonel Willshire to the effect that he (Makanna) would breakfast with the colonel on the following morning. The colonel sent back the reply that Makanna would find all things in readiness on his arrival. He seems, however, to have regarded the message as a piece of insolent bravado, and undeserving of further notice, for on the following morning, April 22nd, he left Grahamstown in order to inspect

CHAP. some horses at a place about twelve miles distant in the direc-  
 XII. tion of Botha's Hill. Grahamstown is situated at the bottom of a wide basin of land, the sides of which are formed by gently rising hills. On ascending the slopes in the direction of the north-east (that is, through the present native locations), a wide expanse of the level country is reached which extends east and west for some miles and is bounded towards the north-east, at a distance of about ten miles, by a low somewhat irregular range of hills. Colonel Willshire with his men, on reaching the top of the Grahamstown hill, bent their course in a westerly direction (*i.e.* to the left) and probably followed a line roughly indicated by the present King William's Town Road, to Botha's Hill. A little after ten o'clock, while the work of inspection was going on, Colonel Willshire observed the hills away to the east, in the direction of Governor's Kop, to be swarming with Kaffirs who were evidently rushing on towards Grahamstown with hostile intent. Orders for immediate retreat were given, and instantly all galloped off back to the village, barely escaping capture by the advancing hordes. About the time when Colonel Willshire first saw the approaching Kaffirs, they were also seen by a Hottentot herd who was tending cattle on the flats above the town. He immediately ran to the East Barracks (afterwards Fort England) and informed Captain Trappes of the 72nd Regiment, who was next in command to Colonel Willshire. The civilian inhabitants did not know of the impending danger until about two hours afterwards, though there were not wanting indications that something untoward was developing. Straggling Kaffirs, armed with shields and assegais and decorated round their elbows and knees with fringes made of the ends of ox-tails, were seen loitering about the hills surrounding the village.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> GRAHAMSTOWN, AT THIS DATE, had not made any great strides in its development. The total number of buildings of all descriptions did not, in all probability, exceed thirty and these were far between. The few houses which had been built on the erven sold in 1815 gave no more than a suspicion that a street, the present High Street, was in course of formation. The simple architecture of the buildings, standing upon the rough grass veldt, and the three roads leading to the place being little more than tracks worn by waggons, the whole must have presented the appearance of a village community in its most primitive form. As far as can be discovered, the following houses constituted Grahamstown at the beginning of 1819. Passing down High Street from where the Drosty Gate (more correctly, archway) now stands, and considering first the

About midday, however, there was general alarm. A small party of these stragglers entered the kitchen of Mr. Potgieter's

CHAP.  
XII.

right hand side of the street, there was a small house on the end plot (Erf No. 32). It was afterwards modified and enlarged and, at a much later date, became the "Old Club". The original building was undoubtedly the messenger's house built in 1814. A few yards farther down was the prison (on Erf No. 30), it is still standing and in a state of good preservation (see illustration, p. 268), as has already been stated, it is interesting as being the very first house built in Grahamstown. Near and next to the prison was a more pretentious house, built in 1818 by Arnoldus Bernardus Dietz, concerning whom there is much yet to relate. Dietz occupied Erven 28 and 26. The house afterwards became the property of Mr. W. R. Thompson, merchant, after whom Thompson Street in that vicinity is named. The fine "Kaffirboom" trees which now or nament that part of High Street were probably planted by Dietz and marked where the front of the house must have been. On the next Erf (No. 24) was a small house in occupation of one Walthal, deputy sheriff and canteen keeper. On Erf 22, Captain D. Page built, in 1818, the house which still stands and is known as the Old Deanery. In 1820 he sold it to the Government as a residence for the Anglican clergyman and army chaplain. Between Page's and the building on the last corner lot (Erf No. 14) there was nothing. On that plot was the small house which had functioned as military hospital on the first establishment, but which at this date had been enlarged and was in use as the Government offices (afterwards known as Dundas Buildings). Continuing down on the same side of the street as far as the corner of the present Bathurst Street (Erf No. 8), there were four or five houses of the usual type, namely, long low buildings with ponderous thatch roofs. There was also the larger building, the officers' mess house (Lucas Meyer's original house), which stood in front of, and in no relation to, the line drawn for the boundary of the street (see plan, p. 269). The left hand side of High Street seems to have been neglected, for it contained only three houses, and one of those was not properly on the line of the street, having been built before the street was marked out in 1814. On the top corner lot (Erf No. 33) was the largest house in the village. It was of two storeys and was the first house of that magnitude which, up to that time, had been built. It is still standing though it has been somewhat altered since its first construction. It belonged to a Mr. Potgieter. His niece was then Mrs. Huntly, whose husband, Captain Huntly, was one of the three white men killed during the Battle of Grahamstown. Mrs. Huntly afterwards became Mrs. Mader, wife of Dr. Mader of Cape Town. That lady was in Grahamstown when the famous battle was fought and was an eye-witness of most of the struggle. She was one of those who hurriedly abandoned the midday meal and fled to the officers' mess, where she remained until conveyed for greater safety to the East Barracks. The author was so fortunate as to have several interviews with Mrs. Mader and to acquire much information respecting these times. She died in Grahamstown at the advanced age of ninety-three. The other buildings on the left hand side of High Street were, a long low thatched house which was afterwards known as the "old guard house," and, farther down, Mr. Brockhuysen's house. This stood on the ground now at the back of the magistrate's court. After this, there were no more buildings until the officers' small houses in the present Church Square were reached. The contour of the ground which now forms High Street was different then from what it is now. There was a somewhat steep descent from the top end to where about the Eastern Districts' court now is, and from there an ascent to the ground now occupied by the cathedral.

CHAP. house (see note below) just when dinner was being served up.  
XII. The uninvited guests had the dinner to themselves. The inmates fled down the embryo High Street and took refuge in the officers' mess house (see plan, p. 269) where they remained until later in the day, when they were removed to the East Barracks. By about one o'clock the invading host, numbering about 10,000, arrived on and occupied the ridge of hills extending along the north-east of the village, that is, from Makanna's Kop towards Belmont Valley. No sooner had Captain Trappes become aware of the intended attack than he commenced an organisation for the defence of the place. The force at his disposal consisted of forty-five men of the Light Infantry of the 38th Regiment, thirty-nine of the Colonial Troop, 135 of the Royal African Corps, eighty-two of the Cape Regiment and thirty-two armed inhabitants—probably the whole of the civilian male population of Grahamstown at that date. Sixty men of the Royal African Corps, under Lieutenant Cartwright, were detached for the protection of the barracks, while the remainder formed an extended line stretching from the barracks to near where the railway station now stands. The Kaffirs having halted upon the ridge referred to, they completed their own preparations and dispositions for the attack. They divided themselves into three large bodies, two of which were detailed for the rush upon the village, while the third, under the leadership of Makanna, undertook the storming of the barracks. About a thousand were detached from these main bodies and sent to occupy a position a few miles to the east in order to cut off any assistance which might arrive from Blaauw Krantz; for at that place the commando of Swellendam burghers under Commandant Botha was posted, and this, as well as most of the military affairs of Grahamstown, was well known to the

At the lowest part there was a swamp. In addition to the buildings above enumerated, Major Fraser had a house where the jail now stands, and the Royal Engineers' establishment, which is now used as the Government veterinary laboratory, was in course of construction. That was the full extent of Grahamstown proper in 1819. The East Barracks, then known as the Wit Rug Kamp (white back camp), must have seemed to be far from the village and accessible by paths through rather bushy and rough country. In that vicinity there was a school where about 200 Hottentot children, whose fathers were serving, or had served, in the Cape Regiment, were receiving the rudiments of education. The wiping out of such an insignificant-looking place must have appeared a matter of no great difficulty to Ndhlabi with the vast numbers he had at his command.



*Photo W D Seaton, 1917*

SITEL OF THE BATTLE OF GRAHAMSTOWN.



leaders of the Kaffirs. The spy, who had kept these people well acquainted with all this information, was none other than the trusted Nootka, who, in his semi-official capacity as interpreter and intermediary between Gaika and the authorities in Grahamstown, had been permitted to go to and fro over the border and to remain in Grahamstown when and how long he pleased. He had been staying in the village some days previous to the attack.

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The firing of some of the stolen guns among the Kaffirs was the signal for the onward rush, and then, with blood-curdling war shrieks from thousands of throats, the black, or rather red, cloud of death and destruction moved swiftly down the slopes towards the apparently doomed village. Onward they came like an irresistible wave, and yet there were no signs of any intention to check them or to sell life dearly. Nearer and nearer until the foremost were about thirty-five paces from the thin line, and just when a few moments more seemed sufficient for the overwhelming numbers to complete their bloody enterprise, the 270 muskets of the defenders rattled and sent forth their leaden hail. The simultaneous volleys worked deadly havoc among the advancing masses, for on account of the huge numbers composing them and the shortness of the range almost every shot brought down a man. In a moment or two this unexpected onslaught brought the enemy to a standstill and a ringing cheer broke forth from the defenders, who then commenced to advance and attack. With very few exceptions the Kaffirs were armed only with assegais, but of these they hurled very few, as, evidently expecting to kill by stabbing, they had broken short the shafts of those they intended to use. These were no match against the muskets of the defenders; thus the fight was in reality very one-sided. There were guns among them, however, for one of the white men killed was shot. The firing continued for about an hour, when the enemy, having effected so little and lost so many, showed every disposition to retreat and were seen carrying off some of their dead and wounded. The attack on the East Barracks lasted longer and was more furious. Urged on by the inspiring presence of Makanna, who was leading them, the invaders became insensible to danger and rushed on to the very muzzles of the guns. Disregarding the fire which was opened upon them, they



CHAP. charged up to the buildings and poured into the barrack  
XII. square, where they were mown down in scores. Again the short stabbing assegai failed them, and after great loss they retired. One hundred and two dead bodies were afterwards counted within the barrack walls. By five o'clock in the afternoon the din of war had ceased and the only Kaffirs in sight were those who were lying dead or dying on the field of battle. The loss of life on the side of the enemy was great. The number killed, of which only the roughest estimate can be given, has been variously stated from 700 to 1,500.<sup>1</sup> A little under 1,000 is perhaps near the mark.<sup>2</sup> One of the first to meet his death was the spy and interpreter Nootka, who had his brains blown out while passing over the small stream on the north of the village in order to join the invaders. Three minor sons of Ndhlabi and other petty chiefs were also numbered among the dead. On the side of the British three white men were killed, one of whom was Captain Huntly<sup>3</sup> of the Royal African Corps, and five were wounded.

<sup>1</sup> Colin Campbell gives 2,000, *vide British South Africa*, p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> Arrived at as follows. There were 273 soldiers and others firing at the enemy in the open. Although the fire-arms of that date did not lend themselves to great precision of aim, yet the nearness of the Kaffirs before the firing was commenced more than compensated for this. Assuming each man to be ready to fire before the order was given and to have had time to reload twice before the Kaffirs had had time to retire far, then that would give three shots to each man, which would account for 819 dead, add to this the actual number found dead in the barracks, *viz.*, 102, and the total on this basis comes to 921. But every bullet may not have found a billet, and some Kaffirs may only have been wounded. This however is met by the fact that many dead were carried off from near the barracks while the fight was in progress, and further, some others were undoubtedly killed in the open after the retreat commenced. A thousand therefore is not very wide of the mark.

<sup>3</sup> The death of Captain Huntly in this engagement is stated on the authority of Mr. Colin Campbell, see *British South Africa*, p. 193. It is not mentioned in the official despatches of the time, further than that three were killed, also in the conversations on these events which the author had with Mrs. Mader, wife of Captain Huntly, no mention was ever made of this.

*Note.*—The following extracts from a private letter written by Major Fraser to Colonel Graham, on the day after the events happened, will be of interest and add corroborative detail to the above account. The whole letter is too long for inclusion *in extenso*. The original is now in the possession of Sir John Graham, of Newlands, by whose kind permission use is now made of it. He commences by saying that by order of Colonel Willshire he was absent yesterday from Grahamstown for the purpose of examining and reporting upon the horses in possession of the armed inhabitants, that having returned "this afternoon (April 23rd) he regretted that that duty had precluded him from sharing in the honour of the day, when the Kaffirs simultaneously attacked 'this village' and the new barracks.

This wholly unexpected reverse and the discovery that there was not the incapability of defence or means of punishing them, which, from their previous experience, the Kaffirs had been led to suppose was the case, undoubtedly modified their subsequent proceedings and simplified the hostile operations which were then in preparation against them. So dispirited were they just after the battle, that a small party of burghers who were travelling over the flats into Grahamstown and passed near them in their retreat, were not even threatened with attack. After the storm, Albany and Uitenhage enjoyed

That yesterday morning about 10½ A.M., when Colonel Willshire was with a few of the Colonial Cavalry near the wood to the east of Botha's abandoned place (about 12 miles distant from this to the left of the waggon-road leading towards Trompetter's Drift), they discovered the Kaffirs in great force, and on the Cavalry retreating the Kaffirs left the woods and with uncommon rapidity made direct over the plains in order to attack the village and barracks, where they arrived about one o'clock. They approached in three divisions, each division a perfect mass, until within shot of the artillery guns as also within shot of the few troops who were assembled here to oppose them (and who advanced a few hundred yards from the houses for that purpose), on which they broke off into something more like a regular line. . . . On their first approach they appeared most determined and matters seemed to bear a serious aspect. They advanced to within a hundred yards of the fire of the artillery and still closer to that of the infantry, but they were soon repulsed, gave way and fled in all directions. It was evident that they did not entertain a doubt of success, otherwise they never would have attempted the like in open daylight and fine weather." He describes the retreat and the carrying off of many of the wounded by their companions, and then proceeds "Many of them leaped into the deep pools of water between this and the barracks, merely keeping their heads above the surface, which they endeavoured to conceal by covering them with such grass and weeds as overhung the banks and so perished. . . . It is really singular how few assegais were thrown by the Kaffirs even when advanced close to the troops, the most of them did not, as usual, carry one in the right hand, but kept them tied up together, in which state many bundles were taken out of the hands of the Kaffirs shot, without their having taken an assegai out. . . . I believe they had very good information as to the state of our force here at the time, and from their numbers they unquestionably expected to overrun this metropolis (*sic*) with little or no opposition. . . . Hendrik Nootka, Gaika's principal interpreter, was here for about a month previous to the attack, during which he seemed most particularly anxious in the fate of the Kaffirs. . . . Previous to Colonel Brereton entering Kaffirland, Gaika sent (at my request) Hendrik Nootka and six others for the purpose of interpreting and conducting the commandos, etc., one of the six and Nootka was with me wherever I went in Kaffirland, that one named Stephanos and another of the six alluded to are also recognised among the dead. It did not want that proof to convince me that no faith could be placed in those calling themselves Gaika's people. . . . I am sorry to add that they (the Kaffirs) succeeded in taking about a thousand head of cattle belonging to this village during the affair of yesterday, most of the cattle belonging to the men of the Cape Corps, being the produce of their hard earnings for many years and the chief support of their women and children. . . . (Signed) G. S. FRASER."

CHAP. the proverbial calm, and during the months of May, June and  
XII. part of July the military authorities were permitted, uninterruptedly, to complete the arrangements for the further punishment of the Kaffirs in their own country.

The protracted delay in the preparations, caused by the epidemic of horse-sickness, was utilised by placing the frontier line in a state of security and also in strengthening Grahamstown, as that place was the chief depot of the military stores and provisions. Towards the end of July everything was in readiness for the forward move. The burgher force, supported by 400 Infantry of the Line, sixty-eight of the Colonial Troop, and thirty-two Royal Artillery with four field-pieces, was formed into three divisions. The left, under Lieutenant Stockenstrom, marched on the 22nd for the Winterberg regions, while the centre, under Colonel Willshire, crossed into Kaffirland by De Bruin's Drift, and the right division under Major Fraser by Kaffir Drift on the 31st.

The movement in the first parts of the campaign were greatly hampered by the inclement weather; there were incessant rains, the rivers became impassable and the ground so slippery that the horses with difficulty kept their feet. Being the winter time also, the nights were bitterly cold. Lieutenant Stockenstrom worked down from the north, scouring all the bush in the vicinity of the Fish River. At one part, his division came in sight of a large number of Kaffirs who had been compelled to leave the bush in order to find pasture for their cattle in the open, but being on the alert and the burghers unable to move quickly enough, they escaped back to the bush. That division continued its operations down to the mouth of the Fish River, searching out the ravines and clefts in the hills of those almost inaccessible parts. By this means the enemy was dislodged more to the east.

The lower, or old, road from Grahamstown to Peddie now crosses the Fish River at Hunt's Drift; in 1819 it crossed a short distance higher up at what was then known as Trompetter's Drift. In either case it winds up a steep hill through the bush and emerges at the top on flat country which extends for miles. Near where this road surmounts the rise, Lieutenant Stockenstrom, on August 15th, had his waggon train drawn up and his camp pitched. Shortly after he had returned from

one of his scouring expeditions on this day, two Kaffir women were seen timidly approaching the camp. It being suspected that they were the bearers of some message of negotiations from a chief, as according to Kaffir custom women were always employed on such missions, Mr. Stockenstrom encouraged them to go to him. It transpired that they had been sent by Makanna to say that he desired to have an interview with Mr. Stockenstrom. The message was sent back that Makanna might safely approach, but that he would be secured and all that could be guaranteed him would be good treatment as a prisoner of war. It was not expected that under these conditions he would have presented himself; he did, however, on the following day and allowed himself to be made a prisoner. He was kindly treated, lodged in a comfortable waggon, over which, however, sentries were placed with orders to shoot him if he attempted to escape—an arrangement which was made clear to him—and fed from Mr. Stockenstrom's own stores. He was shortly afterwards handed over to Colonel Willshire, who sent him under escort to Algoa Bay. On September 29th, Colonel Cuyler wrote to the Colonial Secretary :—

“ I have the honour to report to you that the Kaffir Chief Lynx has been safely put on H.M. Sloop *Nautilus* to be conveyed to Cape Town, that I have requested the Captain of the ship to cause him to be delivered to Colonel Graham if he anchors in Simon's Bay, or to the Commandant at Cape Town in Table Bay, and to ask a military guard to be in readiness to receive him on being landed.

“(Signed) J. G. CUYLER.”

In due course, Makanna found himself among the convicts on Robben Island, where he remained until the night of August 20th, 1820, when, with some others, he overpowered the guard; and taking advantage of some small whaling boats on the beach, they attempted to reach the mainland and Makanna was drowned in the surf.

While the operations in the Fish River bush were in progress, the centre and right divisions were working gradually to the east and driving the Kaffirs over the Keiskamma. That having been accomplished, the country between that river and the Kei was then thoroughly searched and the enemy driven

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still farther either to the east or to the north. The mountainous regions at the source of the Keiskamma, Buffalo and Kabousie Rivers were scoured by Mr. Stockenstrom with the left division, while the remainder of the force operated in the country between those mountains and the coast. As in all Kaffir warfare, it was found difficult to come up with the enemy or meet them in the open, so that very little actual fighting took place. The left division, however, when near the junction of the Kabousie and the Kei on September 16th came suddenly upon a large body of the retreating Kaffirs and a brisk skirmish ensued. The enemy made a determined stand and endeavoured to protect the large number of cattle which had been driven to those parts for safety. But the assegai proving no match for the musket, many of the Kaffirs were killed and 7,000 head of cattle captured.

Ndhlambi's power and influence were quickly waning. Having lost three of his warrior sons at Grahamstown and his chief adviser, Makanna, a prisoner, misfortune further overtook him at this time by the desertion of some of his petty chiefs and numerous followers. With the remnant of his supporters he was a fugitive in those parts where the left division was acting, and making his way towards the upper sources of the Kei into Tambookieland. On hearing this, Mr. Stockenstrom detached 300 burghers under Commandants Van Wyk and Van der Walt for the purpose of following him and, if possible, of capturing him. Ndhlambi eluded them, however, and escaped into safety. This was practically the end of this turbulent and crafty rascal, for though he cautiously returned to near his old haunts, he died within a very few years of these events.

In consequence of the pursuit after Ndhlambi, the centre and right divisions arrived at the Kei some time before the left. In the country along the western bank of that river, a large number of Hintsa's people, the Amangcaleka, were then living. These, on the approach of the forces, fled to a distance over the river, while Hintsa himself fled from his place, now the site of Butterworth, to the Bashee. According to the instructions issued to Colonel Willshire, there does not appear to have been any intention of extending hostilities into Hintsa's country or among his people. Yet, according to Mr. Stockenstrom, this was what Colonel Willshire was about to do when

the left division arrived upon the scene. The accusations against that chief, *viz.*, of possessing stolen cattle, of assisting Ndhambi in his inroads upon the Colony and harbouring deserters, rested upon the word of Gaika, who was at enmity with Hintsa and was, presumably, desirous of involving that chief in war with the Colony. Mr. Stockenstrom therefore prevailed upon Colonel Willshire to suspend any action against Hintsa until it was necessary to have to regard him as an enemy. He suggested that the sentiments of Hintsa should first be ascertained, and that he himself should be entrusted with the necessary negotiations. This course was adopted. Mr. Stockenstrom with some difficulty induced Booku—Hintsa's brother—to approach and confer with him; Hintsa himself being in safety at the Bashee while Booku was empowered to negotiate in his name. Having explained the object of the commando and pointed out the probability of action in Hintsa's country should his people give the least indication of a hostile disposition, Mr. Stockenstrom assured Booku that the Amangcaleka would not in the slightest be interfered with if Hintsa complied with what was right and reasonable. Booku, in reply, stated that the Colonial cattle in his country had been obtained by fair exchange with the people nearer to the border, that Hintsa was more than willing to give up the white deserters who had taken refuge in those parts, as he feared them almost more than he did the commando, and in other ways expressed his desire of maintaining friendly relations with the Colony. Gaika had followed up the commando and was present during the interview with Booku. "He (Gaika) had come in here shortly before I arrived with Booku. The meeting was by no means friendly: Gaika refused to salute or lodge in the same tent with Booku. The next (yesterday) morning I brought them together; old sores were broken up, the argument was hot, and Booku told Gaika to his face that all the Colonial cattle in this country had been got in exchange from himself, Ndhambi, etc., but principally from himself, and defied him (Gaika) to accuse either Hintsa or himself of having joined in the attack on Graham's Town, or in any other depredations in the Colony. Gaika could not refute this, but broke off the conversation by saying that Colonel Willshire should be present when these affairs were

CHAP. discussed."<sup>1</sup> The final result of the interview was that a  
 XII. peace, nominal at least, was patched up between the paramount chiefs of the Amangcaleka (Hintsa) and the Amangqika (Gaika); and as Ndhlambi, deserted by nearly all his people, had fled away to the north, the chief objects of the expedition were accomplished. The return march was therefore commenced and, having recrossed the Keiskamma, the whole force encamped at the Gwanga, a small tributary of the Keiskamma, near the site of the present town of Peddie.

Lord Charles Somerset, in the meantime, was on his way to the frontier in order that he might take advantage of the situation which these events had created, and make such final arrangements as would tend to produce a permanent peace in the districts so long disturbed. Having arrived in Grahams-town, he left that village on October 12th, accompanied by Colonel Bird, the Colonial Secretary, Major Holloway of the Royal Engineers, Captain Trappes and his own son Captain H. Somerset, and travelling by Committees Drift, where Colonel Willshire with an escort met him, arrived at the camp at the Gwanga on the 14th. All the important chiefs and heads of the local Kaffir tribes had been summoned to meet him. There were Gaika, Botman, Nqeno, Habanda, Congo (Cobus), Kassa, and others. Hermanus,<sup>2</sup> or Xogomesh as he was

<sup>1</sup> Stockenström's *Autobiography*, vol. 1, p. 158.

<sup>2</sup> History repeated itself in the career of this man. Like Nootka he was a Gaika and a man of considerable ability; spoke Dutch as well as his own language and also understood English, he thus became very useful in the many negotiations which subsequently took place between the Government and the Kaffirs. Like Makanna he had acquired considerable information and knowledge on a variety of matters not usually possessed by those who had the disadvantage of his surroundings. "His ideas of religion were whimsical and extraordinary. He believed in a Supreme Being, and in an Evil One, but allotted more power to the latter than to the former—that creed suited him best. 'As to de 'odei people,' meaning the other Persons of the Trinity, he said 'he knew notin at all about dem'. Intelligent and acute on most points, yet he was as much the victim of superstition as the most untutored savage of his tribe."—"Biography of the Rebel Hermanus," Godlonton and Irving's *Kaffir War*, p. 144). Shortly after these times he gave great offence to his compatriots by disclosing to the Government some conspiracies which came to his knowledge, and as, in consequence, his life was not safe in Kaffirland, he was allotted land in the Colony and continued a useful civil servant up to about 1846, when he commenced rebellious enterprises on his own account. For reasons yet to be explained he, with an increasing number of adherents, was shifted from first one place and then another. He had for a time a location near the present Fort Brown—hence the old name of that place, *vis.*, Hermanus Kraal. He was one of the chief instigators of

known among the Kaffirs, acted as interpreter in the place of Nootka. CHAP.  
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The conference took place on October 15th. The governor, addressing Gaika, called that chief's attention to the circumstances which had brought him again to the frontier and emphasised the fact that all the toil and hardship which had been endured in the late campaign was for the purpose of reinstating him in his position among the tribes and subduing his enemy Ndhambi, who now, to save his life, had elected to become an exile and outcast in countries unknown; he pointed out that the subordinate chiefs, then present, had been induced to submit to his authority, and, further, that a permanent friendship had been established between himself and Hintsa whereby he had completely fulfilled his intention of according him (Gaika) efficient succour and placing him in a far better situation than he had ever yet been. Gaika acknowledged all this in the impressive manner characteristic of him. The other chiefs were asked to speak for themselves and make their own declarations. Congo admitted that Gaika was his rightful chief, but that, in consequence of residing nearer Ndhambi and the powerful influence he exercised over all who dwelt near him, he (Congo) had allied himself with that chief, but was now prepared to return to his rightful allegiance. The others made similar statements and all acquiesced in these arrangements. The organisation of the government of the tribes, therefore, for a time at least was effected in the way the governor desired. But all this may not have meant much, for there was nothing to prevent these chiefs from re-adjusting matters in any other way they pleased without consulting the pleasure of the governor, and as they undoubtedly felt some intimidation from the large military display which had so recently given an effective demonstration of its strength, a ready consent to these arrangements was easily obtained. Gaika was, of course, satisfied. But a more important stipulation was

rebellion in the war of 1850-53 and one of the first in arms at the head of a large body of followers—and also, it may be added, one of the first to fall. In his attack upon Fort Beaufort at the beginning of January, 1851, he was shot in the first half-hour of the fight. His body was captured and exposed to public view. A very large skull now in the Albany Museum in Grahamstown is said to be that of Hermanus.



CHAP. yet to be made, one to which so willing an assent was not  
XII. accorded.

Much experience of Kaffir promises had taught that compliance with them was to be expected only so long as sufficient power was in evidence to enforce it. To remove thieves from the sphere of temptation and to deprive them of the facilities for accomplishing their ends seemed to the governor a likely means whereby the old troubles might be remedied. The vast Fish River bush had always been their stronghold, and long experience had proved that the efficient protection of the Colony was quite out of the question so long as the Kaffirs had access to its fastnesses and could secrete their plunder there until opportunity offered for driving off the stolen herds to savage hordes in the rear. The new measure, therefore, was to remove the Kaffirs entirely out of the vicinity of the Fish River and to make the Keiskamma the western boundary of Kaffirland; but not, it should be carefully noticed, to extend the Colonial territory eastward to that river. The eastern boundary of the Colony was still to be the Fish River and the country between those two rivers was to be a neutral territory—a no-man's land, in which neither black nor white should be permitted to reside. The new boundary of Kaffirland which was proposed to Gaika was the Keiskamma from its mouth up to where the Tyumie falls into it (the remainder of the Keiskamma still lying in the Kaffir territory), thence along that tributary until "a ridge of the Kat River hills" is reached and then along that ridge to the Winterberg chain "so that the waters that fall from that ridge into the Chumie shall belong to Gaika and those which fall into the Kat River shall appertain to the Colony" (*Cape Gazette*, October, 1819).<sup>1</sup>

As Gaika, in virtue of Kaffir law and custom, was the paramount chief over all the tribes west of the Kei, and, further, as the other chiefs present acknowledged his superiority, Lord Charles Somerset considered it necessary only to consult with him in making these territorial arrangements. That Gaika as-

<sup>1</sup> In consequence of a want of better geographical knowledge of the country at that date, the boundary then intended to be indicated is indefinite and uncertain. The "ridge of the Kat River hills" nowhere touches the Tyumie, hence a part of the proposed boundary has neither water line nor mountain ridge to indicate it. See full discussion on this point in the evidence of Colonel Wade before the Select Committee on Aborigines, *Report*, 1836, p. 292.



*Photo Dobb, Inst. Esatufort*

*VIEW IN ANATOLIA BASIN*



Fig. 4. Dike, Fort Hunt.

ANOTHER VIEW IN AMERICA BIRN.

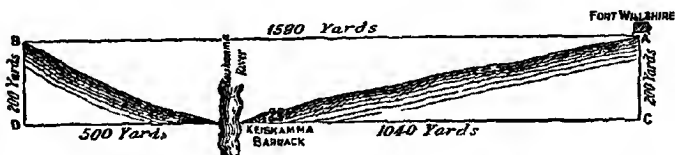
sented to the governor's proposal under apprehension of the superior force present there can be little doubt. He was most reluctant to settle on the far side of the Keiskamma. He greatly desired to retain possession of the basin or amphitheatre formed by the various sources of the Tyumie, the wild and beautiful country now known as the Amatola Basin, which under the first suggestion, namely, that the Keiskamma above the junction with the Tyumie should be the boundary, would have been in the Colony. He appealed for this on the ground that he had been born and bred there. When, however, he was told that at the date of his birth there were no Kaffirs dwelling west of the Keiskamma, he replied that he did not mean that he was actually born there, but that he had lived there ever since he was a boy. This point was conceded to him by making the Tyumie the boundary as stated. This treaty, if it may be so called, was verbal and informal. In thus acting Lord Charles Somerset had no intention of resorting to the extreme measure of depriving the Kaffirs of the country between the Great Fish and the Keiskamma Rivers, but was compelled to it as the only apparent means of protecting the Eastern Province from the harassing and ruinous incursions to which it had, during the years of its infancy, been continually subjected. At a later date, the motives which led to this action were questioned and the change of boundary represented as one of the many instances of cruel injustice to the natives. "Philanthropists" who could listen with equanimity to the reports of the destruction of the dwellings of the white inhabitants by the Kaffirs, and the destitution of their kith and kin, shuddered with horror when they contemplated the cruelty of a Kaffir "King" being asked to shift his kraal from one hill to another. Exeter Hall resounded with howls of righteous indignation when punishment condign overtook the "noble" savages who laid waste, with assegai and firebrand, the struggling frontier districts. Justice meant freedom to the native to despoil and rob the white inhabitant and restraint to the latter in defending his home and property.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following questions put to Mr. Stockenström and his answers thereto, before the Committee on Aborigines in 1836 are interesting and significant (see p. 47 of *Report*):—

557. Then are these the facts of the case (referring to this action of Lord Charles Somerset), that we interfered with the quarrel between Gaiika and other

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In order to enforce and maintain the agreement made with Gaika, namely, that, as far as he was concerned, the neutral territory should not be occupied by Kaffirs, and also that he might not excuse himself of the misdeeds of his subordinate chiefs on the ground of want of power to restrain them, it was decided to establish two forts and to keep a permanent military force stationed in the new territory. The governor, accompanied by officers competent to advise him, made a tour of inspection through the country in question and fixed upon two sites for the erection of the proposed forts. One was at a place known as Funah's Kraal, on a small tributary of the Keiskamma called the Gargai (Kaffir, Inqaiqai). The situation of this fort was on the top of a hill or prominence which



SECTION SHOWING RELATIVE POSITIONS OF LORD CHARLES SOMERSET'S FORT, THE KEISKAMMA RIVER AND HILLS. (From *Blue Book on South African Affairs*, 1819.)

Section on a line drawn from Fort Willshire to the Keiskamma Barrack passing through the River and opposite Bank, showing, that is, where a horizontal line as AB would probably cut that Bank. This however is not given as authentic, being drawn partly from observation only. The distances on the lower line CD are correct from measurement, and the whole is laid down to a scale of 200 yards to an inch.

formed the end of a ridge running somewhat parallel with and at about a quarter of a mile from the Keiskamma River. On the far side of the river there is a similar ridge, thus the spot chosen commanded the approaches to the river in so far as the thick bush on both sides permitted. The situation chosen

Caffre tribes; that we made an inroad into the Caffre territory, in consequence of which we took from them a considerable quantity of cattle; that that led to an incursion on their part into our territory; and that then, having chosen to consider Gaika as the only responsible chief, we obtained his unwilling and reluctant consent to the sacrifice of this rich district of land?—Yes, decidedly.

558. So that, in the first instance, in consequence of our interference, we obtained a considerable quantity of the personal property of these natives; and in the second place, we obtained a considerable space of territory?—Yes. (See also Colonel Wade's evidence on p. 401 of same *Report*.)



*Photo Dr. Davis*

HILL NEAR MIDDLE OF PICTURE IS THE SITE OF  
LORD CHARLES SOMERSET'S FORT



*Photo Dr. Davis*

RUINS OF LORD CHARLES SOMERSET'S FORT



for the other fort was on the Gwanga (Kaffir, Igqwangha), another tributary of the Keiskamma, and not far from the site of the present town of Peddie. The object of this was to control all the country lately inhabited by Congo and his minor chiefs.

All these measures for the restoration of the tranquillity of the country having been satisfactorily arranged, the governor then gave orders for the disbandment of the irregular force and shortly afterwards returned to Cape Town, where he arrived on November 1st. In giving an account of these proceedings to Earl Bathurst, in a despatch dated from his camp on the Gwanga, October 15th, 1819, he thus speaks of the burghers: "Worn out by incessant fatigue, having been for many months exposed to all the severity of a most inclement season, nearly all dismounted, the greater part of their horses having perished, this fine body of men had become most anxious for repose, and having effected with the greatest regularity, bravery and patience the object for which they had been called out, I was not a little pleased that the time was come when I might safely send them to their homes. . . . Near two thousand on this occasion have been in the field for seven months, mounted and equipped at their own expense, and without pay, and having found themselves in six months' provisions. They have in this time lost near three-quarters of their horses and have submitted to every privation, even to want of shoes and clothes, without a murmur."

The force available for the general protection of the frontier and the maintenance of the new territory was, after the dispersal of the armed burghers, far from adequate. Lord Charles Somerset considered that, upon the lowest calculation, from 1,400 to 1,500 men were necessary for this purpose. The total number of troops then serving on the frontier amounted to 1,775, but as orders were at that time expected for the transmission of the Royal African Corps to England for disbandment, the number would then be reduced to 1,219. He therefore decided, much against his inclination, to re-augment the Cape Corps (Hottentots)—a measure equally distasteful to the Dutch inhabitants. Under the circumstances, however, it was unavoidable.

The governor having left the frontier, attention was given to the various heads of his instructions. Parties under Colonel



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Willshire scoured the bushy parts of the Neutral Territory and drove all remaining stragglers over the Keiskamma; the women were given until November 2nd to carry away all the corn, garden produce, and other belongings to their new homes; thus before the end of the year the country between the Fish and the Keiskamma Rivers was quite uninhabited by Kaffirs. Major Holloway of the Royal Engineers drew out plans for the Funah's Kraal fort and the work was commenced forthwith. In order that the new district might have the advantage of a strong post at the earliest possible date, every available man was employed upon the work. The whole of the regular force destined for service in Kaffirland as well as the Royal African Corps were encamped in the vicinity and either assisted in the building operations or kept guard along the river. The work at the fort continued briskly and good progress was made until, for reasons which will be dealt with fully later, it was brought to a sudden standstill, and never completed. At a distance of about half a mile, on the lower ground near the water's edge, another fort was afterwards commenced and completed. This was known as Fort Willshire and became an important place. The unfinished fort received no name. The proposed fort at the Gwanga was never even commenced.

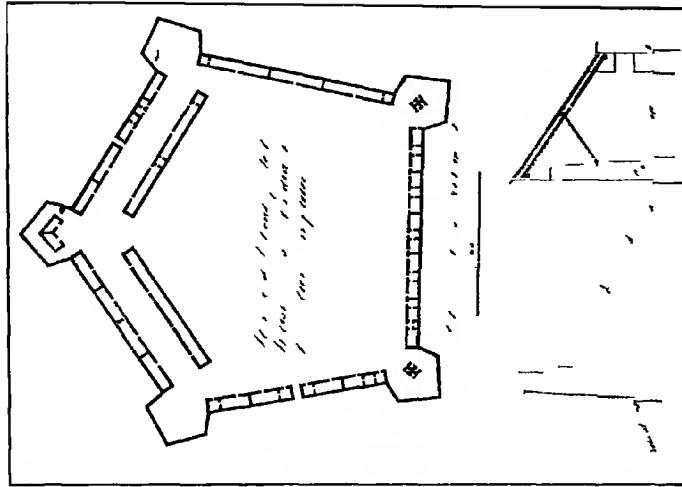
The final result of all these activities was complete tranquillity along the border and a sense of security and rest which had hitherto been almost unknown to the harassed frontier farmers. Further, also, there was the prospect of a continuance of the happy state of things thus inaugurated; for Ndhlabi's power was at length completely broken, and Gaika, though perhaps not best pleased at having his movements limited towards the west, had the satisfaction of retaining and dwelling in the country he most desired. The occupation of the Neutral Territory by a vigilant military force deprived the Fish River bush of its usefulness as a cover for robbers and their booty. Thus all these circumstances conspired to prepare, as it were, the district of Albany for an invasion of a very different character,—namely, the arrival of a large number of emigrants from Great Britain—the British settlers of 1820.

Earlier in the year, Lord Charles Somerset sought permission to return to England for a time in consequence of the ill-health of his daughter. On his arrival in Cape Town from



Photo Dr Durr

CORNER OF THE FORT TO SHOW NATURE OF THE  
STONEWORK



PLAN OF THE FORT AS INTENDED BUT NEVER ACCOMPLISHED

1st The Bastions are carried up nearly to their full height, the exterior wall of the Barracks forming the curtains to the height of 7 feet, consequently, rather more than one third of the whole was finished and in the Bastions were to be formed Cooking Houses, Pivies etc



the frontier, he found awaiting him a despatch in which Earl Bathurst's sanction was conveyed. On January 13th, 1820, therefore, he left Cape Town in the ship-of-war *Sappho*. The reins of government were taken over by Sir Rufane Shawe Donkin, who was on the homeward voyage from India. While the *Sappho* was ploughing her way to the north, she must have passed the first few ships which were bringing to the Eastern Province those who were destined to remould its character and to stamp it as more essentially British.

The fortunes, or perhaps more correctly the misfortunes, of these people—for they were doomed to worse treatment by the sons of Gaika and Ndhlabi than the earlier Dutch inhabitants had received from the immediate followers of those chiefs—and the influence which they exercised on the further development of the Eastern Province, form the burden of the second volume.



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